

A decorative border with intricate floral and scrollwork patterns in a dark brown color, framing the central text.

GUZ 38

Zechariah

Bible Commentary:
David Guzik TEV -
XXXVIII

David Guzik

David Guziks' Commentary On
38 Zechariah
Biblical Text – TEV (Good News Bible)

A Call to Return to the Lord

Zec 1:1 In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of Jehovah came to Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying,

Zec 1:2 Jehovah has been very angry with your fathers.

Zec 1:3 And you say to them, So says Jehovah of hosts: Turn to Me, says Jehovah of hosts, and I will turn to you, says Jehovah of hosts.

Zec 1:4 Do not be as your fathers, to whom the former prophets have proclaimed to them, saying, So says Jehovah of hosts: Turn now from your evil ways and your evil doings. But they did not hear or give heed to Me, says Jehovah.

Zec 1:5 Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever?

Zec 1:6 But My words and My statutes which I commanded My servants the prophets, did they not overtake your fathers? And they returned and said, As Jehovah of hosts purposes to do to us, according to our ways and according to our deeds, so He has done with us.

A Vision of a Horseman

Zec 1:7 On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, it is the month Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of Jehovah was to Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying,

Zec 1:8 I saw at night. And, behold! A Man riding on a red horse. And He stood among the myrtle trees in the ravine. And behind Him were red, sorrel, and white horses.

Zec 1:9 Then I said, My lord, what are these? And the angel who was speaking with me said to me, I will show you what these are .

Zec 1:10 And the Man who stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, These are those whom Jehovah has sent to walk to and fro through the earth.

Zec 1:11 And they answered the Angel of Jehovah who stood among the myrtle trees, and said, We have walked to and fro through the earth, and, behold, all the earth sits still and is at peace.

Zec 1:12 And the Angel of Jehovah answered and said, O Jehovah of hosts, until when will You not have pity on Jerusalem, and on the cities of Judah, against which You have cursed these seventy years?

Zec 1:13 And Jehovah answered the angel who was talking with me with good words, comforting words.

Zec 1:14 So the angel who was talking with me said to me, Cry out, saying, So says Jehovah of hosts: I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion, with a great jealousy.

Zec 1:15 And with great anger I am angry at the nations at ease; in that I was but a little angry, and they gave help for evil.

Zec 1:16 So Jehovah says this: I have returned to Jerusalem with compassions; My house shall be built in it, says Jehovah of hosts, and a line shall be stretched over Jerusalem.

Zec 1:17 Cry out again, saying, So says Jehovah of hosts: My cities shall again overflow with goodness, and Jehovah shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem.

A Vision of Horns and Craftsmen

Zec 1:18 Then I lifted up my eyes and looked, and, behold, four horns!

Zec 1:19 And I said to the angel who was talking with me, What are these? And he answered me, These are the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.

Zec 1:20 And Jehovah showed me four craftsmen.

Zec 1:21 And I said, What are these coming to do? And He spoke, saying, These are the horns which have scattered Judah, so that no man lifts up his head. But these have come to terrify them, to throw down the horns of the nations who lifted up their horn over the land of Judah, to scatter it.

Zechariah 1:1-21

Zechariah 1 – The First Two Visions

A. Introduction.

1. (1) The prophet and his times.

In the eighth month of the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying,

a. **In the eighth month of the second year of Darius:** Zechariah served the LORD in the years after the remnant returned from the 70-year Babylonian exile. His prophetic career began in the reign of **Darius**, the ruler of the Medes and Persians. His career was not marked by the reign of a king over Israel or Judah, because there was no king of Israel or Judah in this period after the exile.

i. The timing of Zechariah's prophecy sets it two months after Haggai's first prophecy (Hag 1:1) and within a month after another prophecy of Haggai (Hag 2:1). This was between October and November of 520 B.C.

ii. "Like Haggai, Zechariah's message is one of encouragement. But he was aware that not all the returned remnant were fully sincere in their desires to serve God, and he therefore counseled them to repent of sin and return to God with all their hearts and minds." (Boice)

iii. If all we had was Haggai to go by, we might conclude that all God was really interested in was the temple. Zechariah gave us more of the story, and showed how God is interested in lives of His people, not only buildings.

iv. The Prophecy of Zechariah is noted for its rich use of visions, pictures, and symbols. In this way it is much like the Book of Revelation or Daniel which also have significant visions. "Haggai lays down the mind of God to the people more plainly in direct and downright terms; Zechariah flies a higher pitch, abounding with types and visions; and is therefore worthily reckoned among the abstrusest and profoundest penmen of Holy Scripture... We pass from dark prophecies to that which is much more dark" (Trapp).

b. The word of the LORD came to Zechariah: We know little about this prophet, though "Zechariah" was a common name in the Old Testament (at least 27 different Zechariahs are mentioned in the Bible). The only details we have about this **Zechariah** come from Ezra 5, 6.

i. Then the prophet Haggai and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophets, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel, who was over them. So Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak rose up and began to build the house of God which is in

Jerusalem; and the prophets of God were with them, helping them. (Ezr 5:1-2)

ii. So the elders of the Jews built, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they built and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the command of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia. (Ezr 6:14)

iii. The name **Zechariah** means "The LORD Remembers," and is a fitting name for a prophet of restoration. This prophet was called to encourage and mobilize God's people to accomplish a task that they had begun yet lost the momentum for completion. He encouraged them indirectly by telling them about God's care for them and by keeping the presence of the Messiah very much in their minds. He worked with others, notably Haggai, Zerubbabel, and Ezra. He warned them of the consequences of neglecting God's work and he emphasized that God wants to do a work through His people.

iv. Jesus mentioned the ministry and martyrdom of Zechariah in Mat 23:35 : *That on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.*

2. (2-6) God pleads with His people: "**Return to Me.**"

"The LORD has been very angry with your fathers. Therefore say to them, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Return to Me," says the LORD of hosts, "and I will return to you," says the LORD of hosts. "Do not be like your fathers, to whom the former prophets preached, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts:

**“Turn now from your evil ways and your evil deeds.
But they did not hear nor heed Me,” says the LORD.**

**“Your fathers, where *are* they?
And the prophets, do they live forever?
Yet surely My words and My statutes,
Which I commanded My servants the prophets,
Did they not overtake your fathers?**

“So they returned and said:

**‘Just as the LORD of hosts determined to do to us,
According to our ways and according to our deeds,
So He has dealt with us.’”**

a. The LORD has been very angry with your fathers: Zechariah began his prophecy with a call to repentance, and a call that remembered the poor spiritual heritage of Israel and Judah. The sin of their fathers doomed the nation to exile, and Zechariah warned the people to remember that the same could happen to them.

i. We should remember that these weren’t “bad people” – they were the remnant that returned from Babylon. Hundreds of thousands of people went into the Babylonian captivity and only about 50,000 returned. Those who did were the most committed to the LORD and to the restoration of Jerusalem. Yet even they, some 18 years after returning to the Promised Land, needed to hear and heed this warning from the LORD.

b. Return to Me... and I will return to you: Adverse circumstances discouraged God’s people, and they wondered why God seemed so far away.

- The land was still desolate after 70 years of neglect.
- The work was hard to rebuild and restore.

- They didn't have a lot of money (Hag 1:6) or manpower.
- They suffered crop failures and drought (Hag 1:10-11).
- Hostile enemies resisted the work (Ezr 4:1-5).
- They remembered easier times in Babylon.

i. Each of these circumstances made them feel that God was far away; through Zechariah God assured them that He was *not* distant. They would **return** to Him, and He would **return** to them.

ii. **Return to Me:** Sometimes we wish God would *make* us return to Him, instead of *wooing* us to return out of our own choice. Nevertheless, God wants our freely given love, so He prompts us to choose Him and **return to** Him.

iii. Zechariah's words remind us of Jas 4:8 : *Draw near to God and He will draw near to you*. God promises to meet us running when we return to Him. We are also reminded that if we are far from God, He hasn't distanced Himself from us, we have distanced ourselves from Him. An elderly couple drove down the road in their car with a front bench seat. As they drove, the wife noticed that in many of the other cars with couples in the front seat, the woman sat close to the man as he drove. She asked her husband, "Why is it that we don't sit that close anymore?" He simply answered, "It wasn't me who moved." If we are far from God, He hasn't moved.

c. **Yet surely My words and My statutes, which I commanded My servants the prophets, did they not overtake your fathers?** God's promises outlived and outlasted all the previous prophets and ancestors. Zechariah encouraged God's people to not only rebuild

the temple (the emphasis of his contemporary prophet Haggai), but to also rebuild their relationship with Him and learn from the lessons of their fathers.

B. The vision of the four horses among the myrtle trees.

1. (7-10) Zechariah's vision of the four horses and their riders.

On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, which is the month Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet: I saw by night, and behold, a man riding on a red horse, and it stood among the myrtle trees in the hollow; and behind him were horses: red, sorrel, and white. Then I said, "My lord, what *are* these?" So the angel who talked with me said to me, "I will show you what they *are*." And the man who stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, "These *are the ones* whom the LORD has sent to walk to and fro throughout the earth."

a. **Behold, a man riding on a red horse:** Zechariah's vision was simple enough in what he saw – one man on horseback leading other horses and their riders, patrolling **to and fro throughout the earth**. Zechariah saw them among **myrtle trees**, in a ravine (**in the hollow**).

i. Specifically, this reconnaissance mission examines the progress of rebuilding Jerusalem and the other cities of Judah. It is here to examine the work of God's people.

ii. "The troop of horsemen were emissaries of the Lord sent on world mission. Like the Persian monarchs who used messengers on swift steeds to

keep them informed on all matters concerning their empire, so the Lord knew all about the countries of the earth" (Baldwin).

iii. "Just as Satan walks about the earth for evil (Job 1:7; Job 2:2; 1Pe 5:8), so the Lord Jehovah has His representatives walking up and down in the earth to examine the affairs of men." (Luck)

b. **Red, sorrel, and white:** Bible commentators debate the meaning of these colors. Connecting them with the four horsemen of Rev 6:1-8 doesn't seem to work, because these seem to be observers and not messengers of judgment as in Revelation 6. Some suggest that the different colors mean different angelic offices.

i. **Sorrel** is sort of a dirty yellow or a spotted, brownish orange.

ii. "Probably pointing out the *different orders* of angels in the heavenly host, which are employed by Christ in the defence of his Church. The different *colours* may point out the *gradations* in power, authority, and excellence, of the angelic natures which are employed between Christ and men." (Clarke)

c. **The man who stood among the myrtle trees:** The myrtle tree is a laurel, which is evergreen and possibly a symbol of the people of Israel. This **man** is the *Angel of the LORD* (Zec 1:11), and is no doubt an Old Testament appearance of Jesus before His incarnation in Bethlehem.

i. There are many examples in the Old Testament of an encounter with a heavenly man known as the *Angel of the LORD* who is revealed to be God Himself (Gen 16:7-13, Gen 22:11-18, Exo 2:3-9, Jdg 2:1-4, and many other places). Because of Zec 1:11, we know this **man** is the *Angel of the LORD*, and that He is God.

ii. We can assume that this was God, in the Person of Jesus Christ, appearing to Abraham before His incarnation and birth at Bethlehem, because of God the Father it is said,

No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him (Joh 1:18), and no man has ever seen God in the Person of the Father (1Ti 6:16). Therefore, if God appears to someone in human appearance in the Old Testament, and no one has seen God the Father, it makes sense the appearing is of the eternal Son, the Second Person of the Trinity, before His incarnation in Bethlehem.

iii. **Myrtle trees:** "Israel is not likened to a cedar of Lebanon, which is majestic, or an oak tree, which is strong. Having blossoms that emit a sweet fragrance when crushed, the myrtle illustrates the strange grace of Israel in affliction." (Boice)

2. (11-17) The angel of the LORD intercedes for Jerusalem and Judah.

So they answered the Angel of the LORD, who stood among the myrtle trees, and said, "We have walked to and fro throughout the earth, and behold, all the earth is resting quietly." Then the Angel of the LORD answered and said, "O LORD of hosts, how long will You not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which You were angry these seventy years?" And the LORD answered the angel who talked to me, *with good and comforting words*. So the angel who spoke with me said to me, "Proclaim, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts:

"I am zealous for Jerusalem

And for Zion with great zeal.

I am exceedingly angry with the nations at ease;

**For I was a little angry,
And they helped; *but with evil intent.*"**

'Therefore thus says the LORD:

**"I am returning to Jerusalem with mercy;
My house shall be built in it," says the LORD of hosts,
"And a *surveyor's* line shall be stretched out over
Jerusalem."**

**"Again proclaim, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of
hosts:**

**"My cities shall again spread out through prosperity;
The LORD will again comfort Zion,
And will again choose Jerusalem.'"**

a. **All the earth is resting quietly:** The patrol found that the world was at peace, but it was not the right kind of peace (**I am exceedingly angry with the nations at ease**). God was angry with the nations of the world because they are at ease while God's people suffer. In God's thinking if the earth is at rest at the expense of His people, there is no rest at all.

i. **And they helped; but with evil intent:** The nations of the world offered some help to the returning exiles, but even their help was polluted by evil motives.

b. **I am zealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with great zeal:** The **Angel of the LORD** shows his heart of compassion for Israel and Jerusalem. God relented and allowed Israel back after 70 years of exile yet the effects of exile were still painfully evident.

i. The word for **zealous** in ancient Hebrew comes from the idea "to become intensely red" and it has the thought of a face becoming flushed with deep emotion. God is genuinely and deeply concerned about the state of His people.

c. **My cities shall again spread out through prosperity:** God solemnly promised to restore Jerusalem and the cities of Judah. This was an especially comforting promise considering the lowly condition of the cities of the Promised Land in Zechariah's day.

i. About four years from the time of this prophecy Zion was comforted and Jerusalem was specially chosen – the temple was rebuilt four years after Zechariah gave this prophecy.

C. The vision of the four horns and four craftsmen.

1. (18-19) *Four horns represent the nations that scattered God's people.*

Then I raised my eyes and looked, and there were four horns. And I said to the angel who talked with me, "What are these?" So he answered me, "These are the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem."

a. **There were four horns:** In Biblical times **horns** spoke of strength and authority, because the power of a bull or an ox is expressed through its **horns**.

i. "Horns, the pride of a young bull, are an obvious choice symbol to represent invincible strength... As trophies of the hunt they represented conquest of strength." (Baldwin)

b. **These are the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem:** Since Zechariah told us there were **four** horns we wonder which four nations Zechariah spoke of here. If he spoke of scattering in a broad prophetic sense – including scattering that had yet come to God's people in his own day – then the likely **four horns** are Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome.

2. (20-21) *God announces judgment against the nations that scatter His people.*

Then the LORD showed me four craftsmen. And I said, "What are these coming to do?" So he said, "These *are* the horns that scattered Judah, so that no one could lift up his head; but the craftsmen are coming to terrify them, to cast out the horns of the nations that lifted up *their* horn against the land of Judah to scatter it."

a. **The craftsmen are coming to terrify them:** God raised up other nations to judge the nations that scattered His people. From of old, God promised to curse those who cursed Israel (Gen 12:3).

i. "And then he finds the right men; not four gentlemen with pens to write; not four architects to draw plans, but four mechanics to do rough work. He who wants to open an oyster, must not use a razor: there needs less of daintiness, and more of force, for some works: providence does not find gentlemen to cut off the horns, but carpenters. The work needs a man who, when he has his work to do, puts his whole strength into it, and beats away with his hammer, or cuts through the wood that lays before him with might and main. Rest assured, you who tremble for the ark of God, that when the horns grow troublesome, the carpenters will be found." (Spurgeon)

c. **To cast out the horns of the nations that lifted their horn against the land of Judah:** God promised to break the power of those who used their power against God's people. An ancient proverb puts it well: "The church of God is an anvil that has worn out many hammers."

A Vision of a Man with a Measuring Line

Zec 2:1 I lifted up my eyes again and looked, and, behold,
A man, and a measuring line in his hand!

Zec 2:2 And I said, Where are you going? And he said to me, To measure Jerusalem, to see what is its breadth and what its length.

Zec 2:3 And, behold, the angel who was talking with me went out, and another angel went out to meet him,

Zec 2:4 and said to him, Run, speak to this young man, saying, Jerusalem shall be inhabited, as towns without walls, for the multitude of men and livestock in her midst.

Zec 2:5 And I will be to her a wall of fire all around, and I will be for glory in her midst, declares Jehovah.

Zec 2:6 Ho! Ho! Flee then from the land of the north, says Jehovah. For I have scattered you as the four winds of the heavens, declares Jehovah.

Zec 2:7 Ho, O Zion! Escape, you who live with the daughter of Babylon.

Zec 2:8 For so says Jehovah of hosts: He has sent Me after glory, to the nations who plundered you; for he who touches you touches the pupil of His eye.

Zec 2:9 For, behold, I will shake My hand over them, and they shall be a prize for their servants. And you shall know that Jehovah has sent Me.

Zec 2:10 Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion. For, lo, I come; and I will dwell among you, says Jehovah.

Zec 2:11 And many nations shall be joined to Jehovah in that day, and they shall be My people. And I will dwell among you; and you shall know that Jehovah of hosts has sent Me to you.

Zec 2:12 And Jehovah shall possess Judah, His portion in the holy land, and He shall again choose Jerusalem.

Zec 2:13 All flesh, be silent before Jehovah. For He is raised up out of His holy habitation.

Zechariah 2:1-13

Zechariah 2 – A City Without Walls

A. Call to Return to the Promised Land.

1. (1-5) The man with the measuring line and the protection promised.

Then I raised my eyes and looked, and behold, a man with a measuring line in his hand. So I said, "Where are you going?" And he said to me, "To measure Jerusalem, to see what *is* its width and what *is* its length." And there *was* the angel who talked with me, going out; and another angel was coming out to meet him, who said to him, "Run, speak to this young man, saying: 'Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls, because of the multitude of men and livestock in it. For I,' says the LORD, 'will be a wall of fire all around her, and I will be the glory in her midst.'"

a. **A man with a measuring line in his hand:** This was undoubtedly an angelic being and some think it was the Angel of the LORD. Angelic beings never truly become human beings but they can take human form.

b. **To see what is its width and what is its length:** Apparently Jerusalem was measured to make sure that it is large enough for the multitudes God would bring to it. In the time of Zechariah it seemed strange to worry about Jerusalem being big enough, because there seemed to be too few people for the city.

i. It is as if the **man with a measuring line** went into a huge old cathedral where only a few attended church and started to make sure it was large enough for the crowds God was sure to bring.

c. **Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls... For I... will be a wall of fire all around her:** God promised to bring so many people to Jerusalem that the crowds would overflow the walls of the city. The effect on the walls would not matter because God would be their protection. He will be **a wall of fire all around her.**

i. This prophecy had a short-term fulfillment in God's protection of the rebuilding work and blessing of the city under Ezra and Nehemiah. But clearly, its ultimate fulfillment will be rebuilding under the rule of the Messiah.

ii. Today Jerusalem is indeed a city **without walls**, because in modern warfare they are useless in defending the city. Ultimately Jerusalem will be a city **without walls** because the prince of peace will reign from Jerusalem and He will be her protection.

2. (6-7) Exiles exhorted to return.

"Up, up! Flee from the land of the north," says the LORD; "for I have spread you abroad like the four winds of heaven," says the LORD. "Up, Zion! Escape, you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon."

a. **Flee from the land of the north:** In Zechariah's day few of those who were carried to captivity in the Babylonian Empire returned to the Promised Land when they were allowed to. Here the LORD exhorted His people to return back to their land.

i. Sadly most of the exiles were comfortable in Babylon and refused to endure the challenge to build a work of God.

b. **Escape, you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon:** Throughout the Bible **Babylon** is used as an idea as well as a literal city. If Jerusalem carried the idea

of "God's city" then **Babylon** carries the idea of the city of the world. Zechariah's call to come out of **Babylon** is both literal and figurative (Rev 18:4-5).

B. Reasons for rejoicing.

1. (8-9) God promises to protect His precious people.

For thus says the LORD of hosts: "He sent Me after glory, to the nations which plunder you; for he who touches you touches the apple of His eye. "For surely I will shake My hand against them, and they shall become spoil for their servants. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me."

a. **He who touches you touches the apple of His eye:** The phrase "**apple of His eye**" was used to describe something precious, easily injured, and demanding protection.

i. "He esteems them as much as men value their eyesight, and is as careful to protect them from injury, as men are to protect the apple of their eye. The pupil of the eye is the tenderest part of the tenderest organ, and very fitly sets forth the inexpressible tenderness of God's love." (Spurgeon)

b. **They shall become spoil for their servants:** God promises that those who enslaved the people of God would **become spoil** for the restored people of God. The enslavers would become enslaved. This will be ultimately fulfilled in the millennial reign of Jesus.

i. **I will shake My hand against them:** All God needs to do to bring such a dramatic reversal of standing is to **shake** his **hand** against the enemies of His people.

2. (10-13) The promise of the presence of the LORD.

“Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! For behold, I am coming and I will dwell in your midst,” says the LORD. “Many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and they shall become My people. And I will dwell in your midst. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you. “And the LORD will take possession of Judah as His inheritance in the Holy Land, and will again choose Jerusalem. Be silent, all flesh, before the LORD, for He is aroused from His holy habitation!”

a. **Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion:** God didn’t expect His people to be passive or reserved in view of such dramatic promises. He expected them to **sing and rejoice**.

b. **I am coming and will dwell in your midst:** God’s people should be excited because He would be *among them* in a unique and powerful way.

c. **Many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day:** God’s people should be excited because God would bring many into His Kingdom. God’s desire to bless for Israel was never intended to stop with Israel, but to use them as a channel of blessing for **many nations**.

d. **In the Holy Land:** This is the only place where the phrase **Holy Land** is used in the Bible. The land is **holy** because it is separated unto God in a unique way. Some assume that it is only the *people* of Judah and Jerusalem that are God’s holy inheritance but passages like this show that **land** itself is **holy** and precious to God.

A Vision of Joshua the High Priest

Zec 3:1 And he made me see Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of Jehovah, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him.

Zec 3:2 And Jehovah said to Satan, Jehovah rebuke you, Satan! And, Jehovah who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked out of the fire?

Zec 3:3 And Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and he stood before the Angel.

Zec 3:4 And He answered and spoke to those who stood before Him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And He said to him, Behold, I have caused your iniquity to pass from you, and I will clothe you with ceremonial robes.

Zec 3:5 And I said, Let them set a clean turban on his head. And they set a clean turban on his head and clothed him with clothing. And the Angel of Jehovah stood by.

Zec 3:6 And the Angel of Jehovah charged Joshua, saying,

Zec 3:7 So says Jehovah of hosts: If you will walk in My ways, and if you will keep My charge, then you shall also judge My house, and shall also keep My courts, and I will give you room to walk among these who stand by.

Zec 3:8 Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, you and your associates who are sitting before you; for they are men of symbol.

Zec 3:9 For, behold, I will bring forth My Servant, the BRANCH. For behold, the stone which I have given before Joshua, on the one stone are seven eyes. I will engrave its engraving, says Jehovah of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.

Zec 3:10 In that day, says Jehovah of hosts, you shall invite each man to his neighbor to sit under the vine and under the fig tree.

Zechariah 3:1-10

Zechariah 3 – The Cleansing of Joshua the High Priest

A. The vision of the LORD, Satan, and Joshua the High Priest.

1. (1-3) The Angel of the LORD stands against Satan on Joshua's behalf.

Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him. And the LORD said to Satan, "The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?" Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and was standing before the Angel.

a. **Then he showed me Joshua the high priest:** Joshua was the High Priest at the time (Hag 1:1). In his vision, Zechariah saw the High Priest in the presence of the LORD (**standing before the Angel of the LORD**), and he was **clothed with filthy garments**.

b. **Standing before the Angel of the LORD:** The phrase **standing before** has the idea of priestly service. Joshua wasn't in God's presence just as a spectator but as a ministering priest.

c. **Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him:** Satan hated the whole scene. He hates it when God's people come into the presence of the LORD. He hates it when they come into God's presence to serve and honor the LORD.

i. "Satan must have been pointing to those [filthy clothes] and declaring forcefully that Joshua was unfit to stand before the Lord in this office." (Boice)

ii. This is all according to character for **Satan**. The name **Satan** literally means *adversary* or *opponent*. He stands against us in spiritual battle (Eph 6:10-18). The only thing worse than having Satan as an adversary is to have him as a friend.

d. **The LORD rebuke you, Satan!** We see the LORD – either directly, if the Angel of the LORD is Jesus in this place, or indirectly exercising authority through the Angel of the LORD – standing before **Satan** and preventing his advance.

i. God does allow Satan to attack and harass His people, but He always strictly regulates what Satan is allowed to do. Satan wanted to destroy Simon Peter, sifting him like wheat (Luk 22:31-32) but Jesus prayed for Peter and stood beside him and did not allow Satan to carry out every evil intention of his heart.

ii. “Take note that this rebuke comes at the right season. When Satan accuses, Christ pleads. He does not wait till the case has gone against us and then express his regret, but he is always a very present help in time of trouble. He knows the heart of Satan, being omniscient God, and long before Satan can accuse he puts in the demurrer, the blessed plea on our behalf, and stays the action till he gives an answer which silences for ever every accusation.” (Spurgeon)

iii. **The LORD rebuke you:** Jud 1:9 tells us that Michael the archangel used this same phrase in battling against Satan. The example here of the Angel of the LORD and of Michael shows us a model for spiritual warfare – that we always should battle with the LORD’s authority. In His authority we fight *from* a place of victory, more than fighting for victory.

e. **The LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you:** With this phrase, God reinforced the important standing of **Jerusalem** in His eyes. As mentioned in Zec 2:12 it is His *Holy Land*.

f. **Is this not a brand plucked from the fire:** Joshua the High Priest had a place of high standing – next to the Angel of the LORD and protected against Satanic attack. Still, this place of high privilege was not based on Joshua's own goodness or merit; he himself was rescued as a **brand plucked from the fire**. This is even more boldly stated in that Joshua stood **clothed in filthy garments**. Satan had a lot to accuse Joshua of, but Joshua had an even greater advocate in the Angel of the LORD.

i. A **brand** is a burnt, burning, or smoldering piece of wood. Think of a campfire with a blackened, charred chunk of wood smoking in the ashes. It isn't worth much at all and will be consumed completely if it isn't **plucked from the fire**.

ii. "So it is with the child of God. What is he at the best? Till he is taken up to heaven, he is nothing but a brand plucked out of the fire. It is his daily moan that he is a sinner; but Christ accepts him as he is: and he shuts the devil's mouth by telling him, 'Thou sayest this man is black – of course he is: what did I think he was but that? He is a brand plucked out of the fire. I plucked him out of it. He was burning when he was in it: he is black now he is out of it. He was what I knew he would be; he is not what I mean to make him, but he is what I knew he would be. I have chosen him as a brand plucked out of the fire. What hast thou to say to that?' Do observe that this plea did not require a single word to be added to it from Joshua." (Spurgeon)

iii. "Such is the divine economy, that God makes much of brands, fragments, castaways. What others regard as unworthy of their heed is dear and priceless to the great Lover of souls." (Meyer)

iv. "This question, as it appears to me, will bear three renderings; first, it may be looked upon as *an exclamation of wonder*: 'Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire!' Secondly, *as an enquiry or hope*: 'Is not *this* a brand' – this one particularly, 'plucked out of the fire?' And, in the third place, it is certainly *a defiance for us, assured of our safety, to throw into the face of Satan, the accuser*: 'Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?' " (Spurgeon)

v. When John Wesley was only six years old, he was trapped in a burning house and was only rescued when one neighbor climbed on another's shoulders and pulled him out of window. A picture of the scene was drawn for Wesley and he kept the drawing until he died, and wrote under it Zec 3:2 : *Is this not a brand plucked from the burning?*

2. (4-5) *Joshua's iniquity is removed, and is given clean garments.*

Then He answered and spoke to those who stood before Him, saying, "Take away the filthy garments from him." And to him He said, "See, I have removed your iniquity from you, and I will clothe you with rich robes." And I said, "Let them put a clean turban on his head." So they put a clean turban on his head, and they put the clothes on him. And the Angel of the LORD stood by.

a. **Take away the filthy garments from him:** As Joshua the High Priest stood in the presence of the LORD, Satan accused him on seemingly solid grounds – Joshua was guilty of standing before God in **filthy garments**. Nevertheless, the LORD fixed the problem by cleansing Joshua, taking away the **filthy garments** and the **iniquity** they represented.

i. The Hebrew word translated **filthy** is “the strongest expression in the Hebrew language for filth of the most vile and loathsome character” (Feinberg, cited in Barker).

b. **And I will clothe you with rich robes:** Joshua not only enjoyed having his **iniquity** removed, he also was given a *positive* righteousness – clothed with **rich robes**. The thought of being clothed by God in righteousness runs from Genesis (Gen 3:7; Gen 3:21) to Revelation (Rev 7:13-14).

c. **Let them put a clean turban on his head:** The **turban** was part of the High Priest’s garments and on the front it had a gold plate inscribed with the phrase HOLINESS TO THE LORD (Exo 28:36-38).

B. God’s message to Joshua the High Priest.

1. (6-7) *A personal admonishment and promise to Joshua.*

Then the Angel of the LORD admonished Joshua, saying, “Thus says the LORD of hosts:

**‘If you will walk in My ways,
And if you will keep My command,
Then you shall also judge My house,
And likewise have charge of My courts;
I will give you places to walk
Among these who stand here.**

a. **If you will walk in My ways and if you will keep my command:** Joshua in Zechariah’s day was encouraged much the same way that the first Joshua was admonished. *Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go* (Jos 1:7).

b. **Then you shall also judge My house, and likewise have charge of My courts:** God promised Joshua that he would indeed continue to serve as High Priest as he was diligent to stay obedient to God.

c. **I will give you places to walk among these who stand here:** God promised Joshua privileged access into the presence of God. This wasn't a surprising promise for a High Priest, but we have the same promise: *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.* (Heb 4:16)

2. (8-10) *A prophetic message of Messiah and His reign.*

**'Hear, O Joshua, the high priest,
You and your companions who sit before you,
For they are a wondrous sign;
For behold, I am bringing forth My Servant the
BRANCH.
For behold, the stone
That I have laid before Joshua:
Upon the stone *are* seven eyes.
Behold, I will engrave its inscription,"
Says the LORD of hosts,
'And I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.
In that day,' says the LORD of hosts,
'Everyone will invite his neighbor
Under his vine and under his fig tree.'"**

a. **I am bringing forth My Servant the BRANCH:** The term **Branch** is used several times as a title for the Messiah (Isa 4:2; Isa 11:1, Jer 23:5; Jer 33:15). The **BRANCH** is associated with fruitfulness and life. Jesus used the same image when He said that He was the vine and we are the branches (Joh 15:5).

b. **For behold, the stone I have laid before Joshua:** If a branch seems weak, then God gives us another

picture – a **stone**, having **seven eyes**. In the thinking of the ancient world eyes represented knowledge because we learn more through our eyes than any other way. The **seven eyes** speak of the perfection and fullness of the knowledge and wisdom of the Messiah.

c. **I will engrave its inscription:** Early Christians saw the engraving on the stone to be a picture of Jesus' wounds. The engraving could also be a mark of identification or beautification.

d. **Everyone will invite his neighbor under his vine and under his fig tree:** This is a proverbial expression that means prosperity and peace (1Ki 4:25, 2Ki 18:31). Ultimately, this is the peace that the reign of the Messiah brings. This vision and word from Zechariah shows how much God wanted to encourage and strengthen Joshua, and He does it in the best way: setting his eyes on our Messiah, Jesus Christ. That is always our best encouragement.

A Vision of a Golden Lampstand

Zec 4:1 And the angel who was speaking with me returned and awakened me, as a man is awakened out of his sleep.

Zec 4:2 And he said to me, What do you see? And I said, I see, and behold, a lampstand, all of it gold, and a bowl on its top, and its seven lamps on it, and seven spouts each to the seven lamps on its top;

Zec 4:3 and two olive trees are beside it, one on the right of the bowl, and one on its left.

Zec 4:4 And I answered and spoke to the angel who was talking with me, saying, What are these, my lord?

Zec 4:5 And the angel who was speaking with me answered and said to me, Do you not know what these are ? And I said, No, my lord.

Zec 4:6 Then he answered and spoke to me, saying, This is the word of Jehovah to Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, says Jehovah of hosts.

Zec 4:7 Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain. And he shall bring forth the capstone with shouts: Grace! Grace to it!

Zec 4:8 And the word of Jehovah was to me, saying,

Zec 4:9 The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it . And you shall know that Jehovah of hosts has sent me to you.

Zec 4:10 For who has despised the day of small things? For they shall rejoice and shall see the plummet stone in the hand of Zerubbabel. These seven are the eyes of Jehovah; they run to and fro through all the earth.

Zec 4:11 And I answered and said to him, What are these two olive trees on the right of the lampstand, and on its left?

Zec 4:12 And I answered a second time and said to him, What are the two clusters of olives beside the two golden pipes, emptying the golden oil from themselves?

Zec 4:13 And he spoke to me, saying, Do you not know what these are ? And I said, No, my lord.

Zec 4:14 And he said, These are the two sons of fresh oil who stand by the Lord of the whole earth.

Zechariah 4:1-14

Zechariah 4 – By My Spirit, Says the LORD

A. Zechariah's vision.

1. (1-3) Zechariah's vision of the olive trees and lampstands.

Now the angel who talked with me came back and wakened me, as a man who is wakened out of his

sleep. And he said to me, "What do you see?" So I said, "I am looking, and there *is* a lampstand of solid gold with a bowl on top of it, and on the *stand* seven lamps with seven pipes to the seven lamps. Two olive trees *are* by it, one at the right of the bowl and the other at its left."

a. **As a man who is wakened out of his sleep:** Zechariah had that woozy feeling that we get if we are awakened suddenly from a deep sleep.

b. **A lampstand of solid gold:** God gave Zechariah a vision of the golden lampstand that was meant to stand in the temple. Since Zechariah and his people were there to rebuild the temple, it made sense that God spoke to them in images related to the temple.

c. **Seven pipes to the seven lamps... two olive trees:** In addition to the **lampstand**, Zechariah saw something that was never in the temple – **two olive trees** that supplied the **seven lamps** with oil through **seven pipes**.

i. One of the more tedious duties of the temple service was the constant care of the lamps on the golden lampstand. They had to be continually refilled with oil, cleaned of soot, and their wicks had to be maintained. In this vision, Zechariah sees "self-filling" lamps, fed directly from two olive trees.

ii. In the temple, the lamps were fueled by pure, specially prepared olive oil. The lampstand Zechariah saw in his vision was fed straight from the trees.

2. (4-5) *Zechariah asks for an explanation of the vision.*

So I answered and spoke to the angel who talked with me, saying, "What *are* these, my lord?" Then the angel who talked with me answered and said to me,

“Do you not know what these are?” And I said, “No, my lord.”

a. **What are these, my lord?** Zechariah saw the vision, but didn’t understand what it meant. What he saw was simple but unusual – a lampstand with lamps supplied with oil directly through pipes coming from two olive trees.

b. **Do you not know what these are?** The angel made sure that Zechariah knew that he must come to understand the meaning of this vision.

B. The meaning of the vision

1. (6-7) How Zerubbabel will accomplish the work: by the Spirit of God.

So he answered and said to me:

**“This *is* the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel:
‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’
Says the LORD of hosts.**

Who *are* you, O great mountain?

Before Zerubbabel *you shall become* a plain!

And he shall bring forth the capstone

With shouts of “Grace, grace to it!”””

a. **This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel:** Zerubbabel was the civic leader of Jerusalem, and had the responsibility to finish the work of rebuilding the temple. The work had stalled, and Zerubbabel needed encouragement to carry on the work.

b. **‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ says the LORD of hosts:** In the vision of Zechariah 3 God spoke to Zerubbabel about the issue of *purity*. But purity alone was not enough to accomplish the work of God – the work of God also needs *resources*, and not the resources of human **might** or **power**.

i. **Might** focuses on *collective* strength, the resources of a group or army. **Power** focuses on individual strength. God says, "not by the resources of many or one, but by My Spirit. It will not be by your cleverness, your ability, or your physical strength that the temple will be rebuilt, but by the Spirit of God."

ii. The necessary resource for God's work is the Holy Spirit and God promises Zerubbabel a rich resource in the Spirit of God to accomplish His work. When we trust in our own resources – whether they be small or great in the eyes of man – then we don't enjoy the full supply of the Spirit. "Oh! May God send us poverty; may God send us lack of means, and take away our power of speech if it must be, and help us only to stammer, if we may only thus get the blessing. Oh! I rave to be useful to souls, and all the rest may go where it will" (Spurgeon).

iii. This was the Spirit – the breath – the *ruach* of the LORD which worked in creation (Gen 1:2), at the Red Sea, to open and close it (Exo 15:8; Exo 15:10) and that gave life to dead bones (Eze 37:1-14).

iv. Looking back to the vision earlier in the chapter, we see that God wanted Zerubbabel to know that the Holy Spirit would continually supply his need, just as the oil trees in the vision continually supplied oil to the lamps on the lampstand. God wants His supply and our reliance on the Holy Spirit to be *continual*.

v. "O churches! take heed lest ye trust in yourselves; take heed lest ye say, 'We are a respectable body,' 'We are a mighty number,' 'We are a potent people;' take heed lest ye begin to glory in your own strength; for when that is done, 'Ichabod' shall be written on your walls and your glory shall depart from you. Remember, that he who was with us when we were

but few, must be with us now we are many, or else we must fail; and he who strengthened us when we were but as 'little in Israel,' must be with us, now that we are like 'the thousands of Manasseh,' or else it is all over with us and our day is past." (Spurgeon)

c. **By My Spirit:** Oil is a good representation of the Holy Spirit

- Oil *lubricates* when used for that purpose – there is little friction and wear among those who are lubricated by the Spirit of God.
- Oil *heals* and was used as a medicinal treatment in Biblical times (Luk 10:34) – the Spirit of God brings healing and restoration.
- Oil *lights* when it is burned in a lamp – where the Spirit of God is there is light.
- Oil *warms* when it is used as fuel for a flame – where the Spirit of God is there is warmth and comfort.
- Oil *invigorates* when used to massage – the Holy Spirit invigorates us for His service.
- Oil *adorns* when applied as a perfume – the Holy Spirit adorns us and makes us more pleasant to be around.
- Oil *polishes* when used to shine metal – the Holy Spirit wipes away our grime, smoothing out our rough edges.

d. **Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain!** The work of rebuilding the temple was so massive it seemed like a **great mountain**. Here God promised that by His Spirit, that **great mountain** would be leveled into a **plain**.

- i. In this case, the **great mountain** may have literally been the mountainous pile of rubble at the temple site. That rubble would be removed and the work carried on.

ii. "You all get up plans and say, 'Now, if the church were altered a little bit, it would go on better.' You think if there were different ministers, or different church order, or something different, then all would be well. No, dear friends, it is not there the mistake lies, it is that we want more of the Spirit." (Spurgeon)

e. **He shall bring forth the capstone with shouts of "Grace, grace to it!"** This was God assurance to Zerubbabel that not only would the work be finished, but *Zerubbabel* – **he** – shall finish it, setting the **capstone** and declaring that it was all a work of **grace**.

i. When the work is done through human **might** or **power** we can take credit for it, but when the work is done by the continual supply of the **Spirit**, then it is all to the glory of God's **grace**.

2. (8-10) *More encouragement for Zerubbabel.*

Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying:

"The hands of Zerubbabel

Have laid the foundation of this temple;

His hands shall also finish *it*.

Then you will know

That the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you.

For who has despised the day of small things?

For these seven rejoice to see

The plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel.

They are the eyes of the LORD,

Which scan to and fro throughout the whole earth."

a. **His hands shall finish it:** When the work is done by God's Spirit there are not only resources to *begin* the work, but also enough to **finish** the work. God is one who *finishes* His work (Php 1:6).

b. **For who has despised the day of small things:** Zechariah's question rings true to us today. Almost every

one of us could answer, "I have **despised the day of small things.**" The question provides its own answer: none of us *should* despise **the day of small things**, because God has a wonderful – though perhaps difficult – purpose for those days.

i. It was a long **day of small things** for Zerubbabel, because the work of the temple lay in ruins for almost 20 years. He might have said to God, "What do you mean '**day of small things**?' I've lived with 20 years of **small things.**" Even so, God told Zerubbabel to not despise the time of **small things**, and to consider it is all as just a **day**.

ii. In many of God's choice workers He uses a powerful season of **small things**. Those days are not a mistake nor are they punishment; they are days of priceless shaping and preparation. They are not days to despise.

iii. When Satan tempts us to despise **the day of small things**, he shines as an outstanding liar because *Satan does not despise the day of small things*. Satan *fears* **the day of small things** in our life because he sees what great things God does in them and brings out of them.

iv. Spurgeon spoke to the need for courage in **the day of small things** in our churches: "To me, it seems that it should be your glory to join the poorest and weakest churches of your denomination, and wherever you go, to say, 'This little cause is not as strong as I should like it to be; but, by the grace of God, I will make it more influential. At any rate, I will throw in my weight to strengthen the weak things of Zion, and certainly I will not despise the day of small things.' Where would have been our flourishing

churches of today if our forefathers had disdained to sustain them while they were yet in their infancy?"

v. "God accepts your little works if they are done in faith in his dear Son. God will give success to your little works: God will educate you by your little works to do greater works; and your little works may call out others who shall do greater works by far than ever you shall be able to accomplish." (Spurgeon)

c. For these seven rejoice to see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel: The

seven are the **eyes of the LORD** mentioned in this same context. They **rejoice** when they see Zerubbabel busy with the building work, with the **plumb line** in his hand. The **eyes of the LORD** see it all, and they are happy to see God's people at work.

i. Though the work was empowered by the Spirit of God, Zerubbabel still need his **plumb line**. He still needed to get to work. God could have given Zerubbabel a shortcut and instantly, miraculously finished the work. That's isn't God's way of doing things, because His work in the life of Zerubbabel was as important to Him as His work through Zerubbabel.

3. (11-14) Explanation of the olive trees and lampstands.

Then I answered and said to him, "What *are* these two olive trees; at the right of the lampstand and at its left?" And I further answered and said to him, "What *are these* two olive branches that *drip* into the receptacles of the two gold pipes from which the golden *oil* drains?" Then he answered me and said, "Do you not know what these *are*?" And I said, "No, my lord." So he said, "These *are* the two anointed ones, who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth."

a. **What are these two olive trees:** Zechariah understood the message of encouragement to Zerubbabel, but he didn't exactly understand how it connected to the vision of the olive trees and the lampstand.

b. **These are the two anointed ones:** In Zechariah's day, the **two anointed ones** were Zerubbabel and Joshua. It seems that they were not the entire trees, but **two olive branches** from the trees, probably one branch from each tree. The trees themselves may represent the kingly and priestly offices in Israel.

i. God had a special work for these **two anointed ones**. They would be uniquely anointed to work together and to accomplish the work of God. God often calls two men to work together:

- Moses and Aaron.
- Joshua and Caleb.
- Elijah and Elisha.
- Peter and John.
- Paul and Barnabas.
- Calvin and Luther.
- Whitefield and Wesley.
- Moody and Sankey.
- Graham and Barrows.

ii. God promises to raise up two more witnesses, anointed ones to preach the gospel to the world immediately before Jesus' return (Rev 11:3-13). Rev 11:4 specifically says of these witnesses: *These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth.*

c. **The two anointed ones** had work to do and it would be so supplied by the Spirit of God that they would be like the olive trees with a continual supply of oil for the lamps on the lampstand.

i. **Anointed ones** is literally *sons of oil*. In Hebrew idioms the *son of* something is radically characterized by that thing. For example, the *sons of Belial* totally represent their pagan god Belial. These two are so characterized by the ministry and the power of the Holy Spirit that they are *sons of oil*.

ii. We note that the oil came *out of* the trees. All real ministry is giving of ourselves. It doesn't matter how much we have; what matters is how much we give of ourselves. Some people are like a huge tank of oil that you might see at a refinery. You think, "that's enough gas to last a lifetime" – but you could never fill your tank there. At the refinery there is much supply, but no delivery. A five-gallon can of gas at home can carry only a little supply – but it will deliver.

A Vision of a Flying Scroll

Zec 5:1 And I again lifted up my eyes and looked, and, behold, a flying scroll!

Zec 5:2 And he said to me, What do you see? And I answered, I see a flying scroll; its length is twenty cubits, and its width ten cubits.

Zec 5:3 And he said to me, This is the curse that goes forth over the face of the whole earth. For from now on everyone who steals shall be cut off according to it; and everyone who swears from now on shall be cut off according to it.

Zec 5:4 And I will bring it forth, says Jehovah of hosts. And it shall go into the house of the thief, and into the house of the one who swears falsely by My name. And it shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall devour it, and its timber, and its stones.

A Vision of a Woman in a Basket

Zec 5:5 Then the angel who was speaking with me went out, and said to me, Now lift up your eyes and see what this is that goes forth.

Zec 5:6 And I said, What is it? And he said, This is the ephah that goes forth. And he said, This is their form in all the earth.

Zec 5:7 And, behold, a lead cover was lifted up, and a woman was sitting in the middle of the ephah.

Zec 5:8 And he said, This is wickedness. And he threw her into the midst of the ephah; and he threw the lead stone over its opening.

Zec 5:9 And I lifted up my eyes and looked. And, behold, two women came out. And the wind was in their wings; for they had wings like the wings of the stork. And they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heavens.

Zec 5:10 And I said to the angel who was speaking with me, Where are they going with the ephah?

Zec 5:11 And he said to me, To build a house for it in the land of Shinar; and it shall be fixed and established there on its own place.

Zechariah 5:1-11

Zechariah 5 – Two Visions Regarding the Cleansing of God's People

A. The vision of the flying scroll.

1. (1-2) What Zechariah saw.

Then I turned and raised my eyes, and saw there a flying scroll. And he said to me, "What do you see?" So I answered, "I see a flying scroll. Its length is twenty cubits and its width ten cubits."

a. **A flying scroll:** In this vision Zechariah saw a scroll flying through the air. The scroll was apparently rolled open because Zechariah could see how large the scroll was.

b. **Its length is twenty cubits and its width ten cubits:** The scroll was approximately 15 by 30 feet (4.5 meters by 9 meters). These were the dimensions of the porch of Solomon's temple (1Ki 6:3).

2. (3-4) *What the scroll represents.*

Then he said to me, "This *is* the curse that goes out over the face of the whole earth: 'Every thief shall be expelled,' according to this side of *the scroll*; and, 'Every perjurer shall be expelled,' according to that side of it."

I will send out *the curse*," says the LORD of hosts;

"It shall enter the house of the thief

And the house of the one who swears falsely by My name.

It shall remain in the midst of his house

And consume it, with its timber and stones."

a. **Every thief shall be expelled... Every perjurer shall be expelled:** This makes many think that the text on the scroll contained the Ten Commandments. To steal was to injure your neighbor; to perjure was to dishonor God, because you had sworn in his name.

b. **I will send out the curse:** The two sins, one from each side of the tablets of the Ten Commandments, represented all of Israel's sin. God would curse the people who committed these sins, and also curse their house.

B. Vision of the woman and the basket.

1. (5-8) *The woman sitting in the basket.*

Then the angel who talked with me came out and said to me, "Lift your eyes now, and see what this *is* that goes forth." So I asked, "What *is* it?" And he said, "It *is* a basket that is going forth." He also said, "This *is* their resemblance throughout the earth: Here *is* a lead disc lifted up, and this *is* a woman sitting inside the basket"; then he said, "This *is* Wickedness!" And he thrust her down into the basket, and threw the lead cover over its mouth.

a. **It is a basket that is going forth:** The basket was an *ephah*, it and the **lead disc** were units of measurement and symbols of commerce.

i. **This is their resemblance throughout the earth:** The NIV translates this, *This is the iniquity of the people throughout the land*.

b. **This is Wickedness:** The woman, the basket, and the weight were associated with wickedness. They were images of greed, materialism, and dishonesty for profit.

i. The Hebrew word for **Wickedness** is feminine. This is probably why a woman was the image of evil in this vision.

ii. Zechariah prophesied to those who returned from the Babylonian exile. God's people came back from Babylon with a materialism problem, and this vision spoke to this problem.

c. **He thrust her down into the basket, and threw the lead cover over its mouth:** God first demonstrates his authority over evil then removes the wickedness from Jerusalem.

2. (9-11) *The woman and the basket are returned to Babylon.*

Then I raised my eyes and looked, and there were two women, coming with the wind in their wings; for

they had wings like the wings of a stork, and they lifted up the basket between earth and heaven. So I said to the angel who talked with me, "Where are they carrying the basket?" And he said to me, "To build a house for it in the land of Shinar; when it is ready, *the basket* will be set there on its base."

a. **Where are they carrying the basket:** God would cause this evil, materialistic spirit to be returned to its starting-place: Babylon. There it would eventually be destroyed.

b. **When it is ready, the basket will be set there on its base:** The word for **base** has the thought of a pedestal for an idol. The storks set the idol of materialism where it belonged.

c. **Two women... they had wings like the wings of a stork:** This means that the **women** in Zechariah's vision had big wings, strong enough to take this basket back to Babylon. Some regard these women as agents of evil because storks were unclean animals, but here they seem to do the work of God in sending the wicked woman back to Babylon.

A Vision of Four Chariots

Zec 6:1 And again my eyes lifted up and looked, and, behold, four chariots were coming from between two mountains; and the mountains were mountains of bronze.

Zec 6:2 With the first chariot were red horses, and with the second chariot black horses,

Zec 6:3 and with the third chariot white horses, and with the fourth dappled and strong colored horses.

Zec 6:4 And I answered and said to the angel who was talking with me, What are these, my lord?

Zec 6:5 And the angel answered and said to me, These are the four spirits of Heaven who go forth from standing before

the Lord of all the earth.

Zec 6:6 The black horses in it go into the north country, and the white go after them; and the dappled ones go toward the south country.

Zec 6:7 And the strong colored ones went forth and sought to go, to walk to and fro in the earth. And he said, Go! Walk to and fro in the earth. So they walked to and fro in the earth.

Zec 6:8 And he cried out to me, and spoke to me, saying, Behold, these who go toward the north country have caused My Spirit to rest in the north country.

The Crown and the Temple

Zec 6:9 And the word of Jehovah was to me, saying,

Zec 6:10 Take from Heldai, from Tobijah, and from Jedaiah, from the exiles who have come from Babylon; and in that day you go and enter into the house of Josiah, the son of Zephaniah.

Zec 6:11 And take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set on the head of Joshua, the son of Jehozadak, the high priest.

Zec 6:12 And speak to him, saying, So says Jehovah of hosts, saying, Behold! The Man whose name is THE BRANCH! And He shall spring up out of His place, and He shall build the temple of Jehovah.

Zec 6:13 Even He shall build the temple of Jehovah; and He shall bear the majesty, and shall sit and rule on His throne. And He shall be a priest on His throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between the two of them.

Zec 6:14 And the crowns shall be for a memorial in the temple of Jehovah, to Helem, and to Tobijah, and to Jedaiah, and to Hen, the son of Zephaniah.

Zec 6:15 And the distant ones shall come and build in the temple of Jehovah. And you shall know that Jehovah of

hosts has sent me to you. And this shall be, if you will diligently obey the voice of Jehovah your God.

Zechariah 6:1-15

Zechariah 6 – A King and Priest

A. Vision of the four chariots and their horses.

1. (1-3) What Zechariah saw.

Then I turned and raised my eyes and looked, and behold, four chariots were coming from between two mountains, and the mountains were mountains of bronze. With the first chariot were red horses, with the second chariot black horses, with the third chariot white horses, and with the fourth chariot dappled horses; strong steeds.

a. **Four chariots were coming from between two mountains:** Since the original text says *the two mountains*, most assume they are the Mount of Olives and Mount Zion. **Mountains of bronze** associates these mountains with strength and judgment.

b. **Four chariots... red horses... black horses... whites horses... dappled horses; strong steeds:** The horsemen of Zechariah 1 were observers on reconnaissance. These **four chariots** and their horses seem to be hostile agents of God's judgment, emissaries of His war against the earth.

i. Some want to identify these **four chariots** with Daniel's four world empires (Daniel 2 and Daniel 7) but the colors essentially are the same as the four horsemen in Revelation 6, the emissaries of God's judgment. Some connect these with the angelic messengers of judgment in Rev 7:1-3.

- ii. "In the usual Scriptural symbolism *red* speaks of *war*, *black* of *famine* and *death*, *white* of *victory*, and *grizzled* of *pestilence* (Eze 14:21, Rev 6:1-8)."
(Luck)

2. (4-8) *What the vision means.*

Then I answered and said to the angel who talked with me, "What *are* these, my lord?" And the angel answered and said to me, "These *are* four spirits of heaven, who go out from *their* station before the Lord of all the earth. The one with the black horses is going to the north country, the white are going after them, and the dappled are going toward the south country." Then the strong *steeds* went out, eager to go, that they might walk to and fro throughout the earth. And He said, "Go, walk to and fro throughout the earth." So they walked to and fro throughout the earth. And He called to me, and spoke to me, saying, "See, those who go toward the north country have given rest to My Spirit in the north country."

a. **Four spirits of heaven:** This means that these *four chariots* were actually four angelic beings sent from God. This means that these may not be exactly the same as the four horsemen of Revelation 6, but that the idea of their mission and purpose is similar.

i. John Calvin said that these angels are compared to horsemen on chariots because "These ride swiftly as it were through the whole world to execute what God commands them." If Zechariah had the technology of today he might picture the angels in fast cars or fighter jets, showing how swiftly and powerfully they move across the earth to accomplish God's purpose.

b. **To the north country:** Two of the horses are focused on the **north**, where Babylon and Magog are.

Nevertheless, each of the four extends **to and fro throughout the earth.**

c. **Those who go toward the north country have given rest to My Spirit in the north country:** God's **Spirit** is only at rest when His enemies and the enemies of His people are judged.

B. The crowning of Joshua, the High Priest.

1. (9-11) *Command to make a crown for Joshua.*

Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying: "Receive *the gift* from the captives; from Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah, who have come from Babylon; and go the same day and enter the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah. Take the silver and gold, make an elaborate crown, and set *it* on the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest."

a. **Receive the gift from the captives... who have come from Babylon:** As the refugees continued to return from exile they brought with them gifts from wealthy Babylon.

b. **Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah:** Taking the meaning of the names (**Heldai** means *robust*, **Tobijah** means *God's goodness*, and **Jedaiah** means *God knows*), McGee sees the intention that God knows that through His goodness, He will put His king on the throne, and He will do it in a robust manner.

c. **Make an elaborate crown, and set it on the head of Joshua:** It was absolutely unusual to crown a **high priest**, because priests were never crowned as kings and kings were never priests.

i. 2 Chronicles 26 tells the tragic story of King Uzziah who tried to function as a priest, and was stricken with leprosy to the end of his life. Through the history

of Israel God commanded a separation between the religious and the civil leadership of Israel.

ii. **Elaborate crown:** This was definitely a *royal crown* and was not the customary headdress of the high priest.

d. **On the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest:** There already was a strong, godly civil leader in Jerusalem named Zerubbabel. It seems like it would have made a lot more sense to crown Zerubbabel instead of **Joshua... the high priest**. But Joshua was crowned because a coming descendant of David to rule over Israel would be Jesus, prefigured by the high priest Joshua.

i. Liberal critics are so certain that Zerubbabel should be crowned here that they think that the text is in error. This misses the whole point, because this crowning of Joshua prophesies the King-Priest Jesus.

2. (12-13) *Prophecy of the **BRANCH**, who is both king and priest.*

"Then speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, saying:

"Behold, the Man whose name *is* the BRANCH!

From His place He shall branch out,

And He shall build the temple of the LORD;

Yes, He shall build the temple of the LORD.

He shall bear the glory,

And shall sit and rule on His throne;

So He shall be a priest on His throne,

And the counsel of peace shall be between them both."'"

a. **Behold, the Man whose name is the BRANCH!** We already saw this **BRANCH** in Zec 3:8, and it was a familiar title for the Messiah (Isa 4:2; Isa 11:1,

Jer 23:5; Jer 33:15). The **BRANCH** was associated with fruitfulness and life. Jesus used the same image when He said that He was the vine and we are the branches (Joh 15:5).

i. **Behold, the Man:** "In the Hebrew text the prophecy begins 'Behold the Man,' the very words Pilate used to present the beaten Christ to the people of Jerusalem: '*Ecce homo!*'" (Boice). But in Zechariah's vision it isn't the humiliated Jesus we are asked to **behold**, it is the triumphant Jesus.

b. **From His place He shall branch out:** This speaks of the fruitfulness and spreading life of the Messiah.

i. "He will come where there is little promise of new life, unexpectedly, like the root out of a dry ground." (Baldwin)

c. **And He shall build the temple of the LORD:** The **BRANCH** will rebuild the temple – not the same temple Zerubbabel worked on, but the temple of His people (Eph 2:19-22, 1Pe 2:5).

d. **So He shall be a priest on His throne:** This was an unthinkable concept previously in Israel because priests did not sit on thrones and kings did not serve as priests. Nevertheless, the **BRANCH** is different; He rules as both a King and Priest.

3. (14-15) *The crown as a memorial.*

"Now the elaborate crown shall be for a memorial in the temple of the LORD for Helem, Tobijah, Jedaiah, and Hen the son of Zephaniah. Even those from afar shall come and build the temple of the LORD. Then you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you. And *this* shall come to pass if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God."

a. **Now the elaborate crown shall be for a memorial:** The LORD made it clear that the **crown** for Joshua was a picture of the ruling Priest-King in the future. God never intended for Joshua to take control as king in the Jerusalem of his day.

b. **Hen the son of Zephaniah:** Earlier, *Josiah* was said to be the son of Zephaniah, and Zechariah apparently gave this prophecy in his house (Zec 6:10). Since the name **Hen** means “gracious,” it is almost certainly another name, and an appropriate name for this Josiah **the son of Zephaniah**.

c. **Even those from afar shall come and build the temple of the LORD:** The **elaborate crown** spoke of something that would not happen for a long time in the future. Still, God’s promised blessing in the future means that He wants the work to continue right now, and that He will bless the current work.

A Call for Justice and Mercy

Zec 7:1 And in the fourth year of king Darius, the word of Jehovah was to Zechariah, in the fourth of the ninth month, in Chislev.

Zec 7:2 And Sharezer and Regem-melech, and his men, had sent to Bethel to seek the favor of the face of Jehovah,

Zec 7:3 to speak to the priests who belong to the house of Jehovah of hosts, and to the prophets, saying, Should I weep in the fifth month, consecrating myself as I have done these many years?

Zec 7:4 The word of Jehovah of hosts was to me, saying,

Zec 7:5 Speak to all the people of the land, and to the priests, saying, When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months , even those seventy years, did you truly fast to Me, even to Me?

Zec 7:6 And when you ate, and when you drank, was it not for those eating, and for those drinking?

Zec 7:7 Are not these the words which Jehovah proclaimed by the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited, and prosperous with her cities all around her, and the Negeb and the Shephelah were inhabited?

Zec 7:8 And the word of Jehovah was to Zechariah, saying,

Zec 7:9 So says Jehovah of hosts, saying, Judge true judgment, and practice kindness and pity, each man with his brother.

Zec 7:10 And do not oppress the widow, or the fatherless, the alien, or the poor. And do not devise evil in your heart, of a man against his brother.

Zec 7:11 But they refused to listen, and gave a stubborn shoulder, and they made their ears heavy from hearing.

Zec 7:12 And they made their heart adamant from hearing the law and the words which Jehovah of hosts has sent by the former prophets through His Spirit. And great wrath was from Jehovah of hosts.

Zec 7:13 And it will be, just as He called, and they did not listen; so they called, and I did not listen, says Jehovah of hosts.

Zec 7:14 But I stormed them away on all the nations whom they did not know. And the land is desolated behind them, from passing and from returning; for they made the land of desire a waste.

Zechariah 7:1-14

Zechariah 7 – Obedience Is Better than Ritual

A. Confronting the sin of religious hypocrisy.

1. (1-3) A question about fasting.

Now in the fourth year of King Darius it came to pass *that* the word of the LORD came to Zechariah, on the fourth day of the ninth month, Chislev, when *the people* sent Sherezer, with Regem-Melech and his men, *to* the house of God, to pray before the LORD, *and* to ask the priests who *were* in the house of the LORD of hosts, and the prophets, saying, “Should I weep in the fifth month and fast as I have done for so many years?”

a. **In the fourth year... on the fourth day of the ninth month:** On December 4, 518 B.C. a delegation came to Jerusalem with a question about fasting. At this point, the temple was somewhere around halfway completed.

b. **Should I weep in the fifth month and fast:** The fast in the **fifth month** remembered the destruction of the temple (2Ki 25:8-9). Zechariah also mentioned a fast in the seventh month (Zec 7:5), which remembered the murder of Gedaliah, the last act of rebellion against the Babylonian governor of Judah (2Ki 25:25).

i. The Law of Moses only commanded one fast day, on the Day of Atonement (Lev 16:29-34). In addition to this day, during the exile the Jewish people instituted four more fasts to remember key dates in the tragic defeat of their nation. Here are the additional fasts:

Month/Day	Reason	Reference
4/17	Mourning the capture of Jerusalem	<u>Jer 52:6-30</u>
5/9	Burning of Jerusalem and the destruction of Solomon's Temple	<u>2Ki 25:2-10</u>

7/3	Assassination of Gedaliah and the massacre of 80 men	<u>Jer 4:1-10</u>
10/10	Beginning of Nebuchadnezzar's siege against Jerusalem	<u>2Ki 25:1</u>

ii. Psalms 137 beautifully – and powerfully – described the sadness of heart that made the exiles remember their sin and tragedy with these additional days of fasting.

c. **To ask the priests who were in the house of the LORD:** These men knew that during their forced exile in Babylon they observed these fasts that remembered the tragic fall of Jerusalem. Now since God's people were back in the land and the temple was rebuilt, they wanted to know if it was appropriate to continue to these fasts of mournful remembrance.

i. The matter brings up an issue relevant today: How long should we remember and mourn over our past? Should we do things to remember either our sin or the tragedies of the past?

d. **As I have done for so many years:** These additional fasts were not commanded by God, but instituted by man. Yet because they were traditionally practiced for so long (at least 70 years), they developed an authority of their own. They thought, "We've done this **for so many years**, we may as well keep doing it."

2. (4-7) *Hypocrisy in fasting is rebuked.*

Then the word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying, "Say to all the people of the land, and to the priests: 'When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh *months* during those seventy years, did you really fast for Me; for Me? When you eat and

when you drink, do you not eat and drink *for yourselves?* Should you not have obeyed the words which the LORD proclaimed through the former prophets when Jerusalem and the cities around it were inhabited and prosperous, and the South and the Lowland were inhabited?’”

a. **Did you really fast for Me; for Me:** God’s word through Zechariah rebuked the people of God for what their fasting had become – indulgent pity-parties instead of a time to genuinely seek God. Their lives were not right when they did **eat and drink** – that they did for themselves, not for the LORD. A few days of fasting every year could not make up for the rest of the year lived **for yourselves**.

i. This also shows us that when we cling to the memory of sin or tragedy in the past, we may do it out of simple self-indulgence. We may do it for our self, not for the LORD.

b. **Should you not have obeyed the words which the LORD proclaimed:** Because their hearts were not right with God, their rituals were not right before God. Everyday obedience would make their times of fasting meaningful, but their neglect of everyday obedience made their fasting hypocritical.

i. “It was easy to spend fast-days mourning their losses, but harder to face up to God’s continuing demands.” (Baldwin)

ii. Instead of actively remembering the sin or tragedy of the past, God wants us to focus on active obedience and an active walk with Him. “There is no need to observe the sad anniversaries of our sins and their accompanying punishment, if once we are assured of God’s free forgiveness. When He forgives and restores, the need for dwelling on the bitter past

is over... Too many of us are always dwelling beside the graves of the dead past" (Meyer).

iii. **Through the former prophets when Jerusalem and the cities around it were inhabited and prosperous:** If their ancestors had been obedient they would have never needed to fast, and their land wouldn't have been conquered and desolate.

c. **And the South and the Lowland were inhabited:** Here, **the South** refers to the *Negev*, the desolate desert near the Dead Sea. This area wasn't always desolate; before Israel's disobedience, it too was prosperous and **inhabited**.

B. What God wants: people who will listen and obey.

1. (8-10) *The conduct God desires.*

Then the word of the LORD came to Zechariah, saying, "Thus says the LORD of hosts:

**'Execute true justice,
Show mercy and compassion
Everyone to his brother.
Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless,
The alien or the poor.
Let none of you plan evil in his heart
Against his brother.'**

a. **Execute true justice, show mercy and compassion:** In Zec 7:7 the prophet rebuked the people of God and their ancestors for a basic neglect of obedience. Now Zechariah described the kind of obedience God wanted, beginning with decent and loving treatment of one's neighbor.

b. **Let none of you plan evil in his heart against his brother:** Some among the people of God found it easier to fast a few days a year instead of truly treating others in a godly way. Their bad relationship with others

demonstrated a fundamentally bad relationship with the LORD.

2. (11-12) *The rebellious reaction of God's people.*

"But they refused to heed, shrugged their shoulders, and stopped their ears so that they could not hear. Yes, they made their hearts like flint, refusing to hear the law and the words which the LORD of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets. Thus great wrath came from the LORD of hosts."

a. **Refused to heed... shrugged their shoulders... stopped their ears... made their hearts like flint:** Zechariah vividly described a *progression of rejection*. It begins with simply refusing to **heed** God, then a self-justifying shrugging of **their shoulders**, then stopping **their ears**. It all ends with hearts as hard as **flint**.

i. When you meet people with **hearts like flint**, you know they did not become that way overnight. There was a gradual, certain progression to their present place of hardness.

ii. Baldwin on **shrugged their shoulders**: "Israel had *turned a stubborn shoulder*, like an animal that stiffened every muscle in its effort to refuse the yoke."

b. **Refusing to hear the law and the words which the LORD of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets:** In their hardened state, they just didn't want to hear God's word. When we lose our hunger for God's word it is a sobering evidence of the progression of rejection and hardness of heart.

i. Zechariah didn't doubt that the **Spirit** of God genuinely inspired his words and the words of other prophets.

3. (13-14) *God's judgment on their disobedience.*

“Therefore it happened, *that* just as He proclaimed and they would not hear, so they called out and I would not listen,” says the LORD of hosts. “But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations which they had not known. Thus the land became desolate after them, so that no one passed through or returned; for they made the pleasant land desolate.”

a. Just as He proclaimed and they would not hear, so they called out and I would not listen: Since God’s people refused to listen to God, God would refuse to listen to and answer their prayers. This is just another good reason to stay under the teaching of God’s word – so that our prayers will be answered.

i. I scattered them with a whirlwind: “This refers to the swift victories and cruel conduct of the Chaldeans towards the Jews; they came upon them like a *whirlwind*; they were tossed to and fro, and up and down, everywhere scattered and confounded” (Clarke).

b. Thus the land became desolate after them: Their disobedience and disregard for God led to scattering and desolation. This is always our fate when we allow religious rituals to take the place of a real relationship and daily obedience towards God.

The Coming Peace and Prosperity of Zion

Zec 8:1 And the word of Jehovah was to me , saying,

Zec 8:2 So says Jehovah of hosts: I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great wrath.

Zec 8:3 So says Jehovah: I have returned to Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. And Jerusalem shall be

called a city of truth, and the mountain of Jehovah of hosts, the holy mountain.

Zec 8:4 So says Jehovah of hosts: There shall yet be old men and old women sitting in the streets of Jerusalem; and each man with his staff in his hand because of their many days.

Zec 8:5 And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets.

Zec 8:6 So says Jehovah of hosts: If it is marvelous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in those days, will it also be marvelous in My eyes? says Jehovah of hosts.

Zec 8:7 So says Jehovah of hosts: Behold, I will save My people from the rising sun and from the land of the setting sun.

Zec 8:8 And I will bring them, and they shall live in the midst of Jerusalem. And they shall be for a people to Me, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness.

Zec 8:9 So says Jehovah of hosts: Let your hands be strong, you who hear in these days these words by the mouth of the prophets, that in the day the house of Jehovah of hosts is laid, the temple is to be built.

Zec 8:10 For before those days there was no payment for man, nor was there payment for animal; and there was no peace to him from the adversary who went out or came in. For I sent every man, a man against his neighbor.

Zec 8:11 But now I will not be to the remnant of this people as in former days, says Jehovah of hosts.

Zec 8:12 For there shall be peace for the seed: the vine shall give its fruit, and the ground shall give its produce, and the heavens shall give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to inherit all these.

Zec 8:13 And it shall be, as you were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so I will save

you, and you shall be a blessing. Do not fear; let your hands be strong.

Zec 8:14 For so says Jehovah of hosts: As I purposed to punish you when your fathers provoked Me to wrath, says Jehovah of hosts. And I did not repent,

Zec 8:15 So again I have purposed in these days to do good to Jerusalem, and the house of Judah. Do not fear.

Zec 8:16 These are the things that you shall do. Let each man speak the truth with his neighbor. Judge with truth and justice for peace in your gates,

Zec 8:17 and let each devise no evil in your heart against his neighbor, and do not love a false oath. For all these I hate, says Jehovah.

Zec 8:18 And the word of Jehovah of hosts was to me, saying,

Zec 8:19 So says Jehovah of hosts: The fast of the fourth month , and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth, shall become for joy and gladness and cheerful feasts to the house of Judah. Therefore, love truth and peace.

Zec 8:20 So says Jehovah of hosts: There shall yet come peoples, and inhabitants of many cities.

Zec 8:21 And the inhabitants of one shall go to another, saying, Let us go at once to seek the favor of the face of Jehovah, and to seek Jehovah of hosts; I will go also.

Zec 8:22 And many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek Jehovah of hosts in Jerusalem, and to seek the favor of the face of Jehovah.

Zec 8:23 So says Jehovah of hosts: In those days ten men out of all languages of the nations shall take hold, and will seize the skirt of a man, a Jew, saying, Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.

Zechariah 8:1-23

Zechariah 8 – Jerusalem Restored

A. Israel restored to God's favor.

1. (1-2) *The LORD says: My passionate love for Israel has not diminished.*

**Again the word of the LORD of hosts came, saying,
"Thus says the LORD of hosts:**

**'I am zealous for Zion with great zeal;
With great fervor I am zealous for her.'**

a. **Thus says the LORD of hosts:** God introduced Himself with a title declaring His power and majesty. He is the **LORD of hosts**, with **hosts** referring to the armies of heaven. The title itself is a wake-up call.

b. **I am zealous for Zion with great zeal:** The word for **zealous** in the ancient Hebrew comes from the idea "to become intensely red." It has the thought of a face becoming flushed with deep emotion. This shows that God is passionately concerned for His people.

2. (3) *The LORD says: Jerusalem will be restored.*

"Thus says the LORD:

**'I will return to Zion,
And dwell in the midst of Jerusalem.
Jerusalem shall be called the City of Truth,
The Mountain of the LORD of hosts,
The Holy Mountain.'"**

a. **I will return to Zion, and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem:** God's people and city would be transformed by the presence of the LORD.

b. **Jerusalem shall be called the City of Truth... The Holy Mountain:** Because of God's presence the city will be transformed into a place of truth and holiness. When

God's presence is real and embraced in our life, we become *people of Truth* and *Holy people*.

i. In 2Co 3:18 Paul describes this process of transformation: *But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

3. (4-5) *The LORD says: Jerusalem will be a thriving, safe place.*

"Thus says the LORD of hosts:

'Old men and old women shall again sit

In the streets of Jerusalem,

Each one with his staff in his hand

Because of great age.

The streets of the city

Shall be full of boys and girls

Playing in its streets.'

a. **Old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem:** Because of the difficulty and hardship of returning to Jerusalem, there were probably few old people in the city, and their absence was felt. But the LORD promised that all that would change one day and young and old together would enjoy the city in safety. This was a significant promise because in Zechariah's time Jerusalem's walls were ruined and the city was not safe and secure for **old men and old women** or for **boys and girls playing in its streets**.

b. **The streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets:** Dr. J. Vernon McGee took this as meaning that there would be no cars in the millennial Jerusalem.

4. (6) *The LORD says: Even if it is too amazing for you, is it too hard for Me?*

“Thus says the LORD of hosts:

‘If it is marvelous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days,

Will it also be marvelous in My eyes?’

Says the LORD of hosts.

a. **If it is marvelous in the eyes of the remnant of the people:** The promise of a transformed, prosperous, safe Jerusalem seemed a little too fantastic to believe when the city was half-built and the walls wouldn’t be completed for another 60 years.

b. **Will it also be marvelous in My eyes?** Just because it seemed too big in the eyes of man, it was not too **marvelous** for the LORD. As Jesus said, *“With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible”* (Mat 19:26).

i. “I remember when a boy being taken to see the residence of one of our nobility, and the good friend who took me noticed my astonishment at the largeness of the house. I was amazed at it, having never seen anything like it, and so I said, ‘What a house for a man to live in!’ ‘Bless you, boy,’ said he, ‘this is only the kitchen!’ I was only looking at the servants’ apartments, and was astonished at the grandeur thereof; but the mansion itself was a far nobler affair. Oftentimes when you see what the Lord has done, you are ready to cry out, ‘How can all this be? His goodness, his mercy, is it as great as this?’ Rest assured that you have only seen a little of his goodness, as it were the kitchen of his great house: you have not seen the palace of the Most High, where he reveals his full power and splendor.” (Spurgeon)

5. (7-8) The LORD says: Israel will be gathered, far more than the few who have returned thus far.

“Thus says the LORD of hosts:

‘Behold, I will save My people from the land of the east

And from the land of the west;

I will bring them *back*,

And they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem.

They shall be My people

And I will be their God,

In truth and righteousness.’

a. **I will save My people from the land of the east and from the land of the west:** Proportionately, few among the exiles returned to the Promised Land. God promised a gathering from exile to come that would far surpass the present gathering.

b. **They shall be My people and I will be their God, in truth and righteousness:** The gathering God promised would not just be a *geographic* gathering, but also a *spiritual* gathering. It won’t just be that their address changes, but their heart also.

6. (9-13) *The LORD says: take courage; finish the work, for I will bless you.*

“Thus says the LORD of hosts:

‘Let your hands be strong,

You who have been hearing in these days

These words by the mouth of the prophets,

Who *spoke* in the day the foundation was laid

For the house of the LORD of hosts,

That the temple might be built.

For before these days

***There were* no wages for man nor any hire for beast;**

***There was* no peace from the enemy for whoever went out or came in;**

For I set all men, everyone, against his neighbor.

But now I *will* not *treat* the remnant of this people as in the former days,' says the LORD of hosts.

**For the seed *shall be* prosperous,
The vine shall give its fruit,
The ground shall give her increase,
And the heavens shall give their dew—
I will cause the remnant of this people
To possess all these.**

**And it shall come to pass
That just as you were a curse among the nations,
O house of Judah and house of Israel,
So I will save you, and you shall be a blessing.
Do not fear,
Let your hands be strong.'**

a. **Let your hands be strong:** This encouraging command was for those who had heard the words of the prophets **in the day the foundation was laid for the house of the LORD of hosts**. The foundation was set more than fifteen years before. Though they faced lack of resources (**no wages for man**) and opposition (**no peace from the enemy**), God wanted them to find strength for the work (**let your hands be strong**) in His promise.

b. **I will not treat the remnant of this people as in the former days:** God allowed a period of difficulty but would not allow it to last forever. He would bring prosperity and blessing to the once afflicted nation.

c. **You shall be a blessing. Do not fear, let your hands be strong:** Though their present state was lowly, God wanted Israel to trust in His promise of **blessing**, and let the promise encourage them to diligent, strong service.

7. (14-17) The LORD says: I am determined to bless My people.

“For thus says the LORD of hosts:

**‘Just as I determined to punish you
When your fathers provoked Me to wrath,’**

Says the LORD of hosts,

‘And I would not relent,

So again in these days

I am determined to do good

To Jerusalem and to the house of Judah.

Do not fear.

These *are* the things you shall do:

Speak each man the truth to his neighbor;

**Give judgment in your gates for truth, justice, and
peace;**

**Let none of you think evil in your heart against your
neighbor;**

And do not love a false oath.

For all these *are things* that I hate,’

Says the LORD.”

a. **Just as I determined to punish you when your fathers provoked Me... in these days I am determined to do good:** God promised blessing to Israel instead of cursing, and He promised it on the principle of the Mosaic Covenant.

i. “God’s strange work is judgment. His delight is to bless His people.” (Unger)

b. **These are the things you shall do:** God promised blessing to an obedient Israel and cursing to a disobedient Israel (Deu 28:1-2; Deu 28:15). If God will bless instead of curse they must fulfill their end of the Mosaic covenant, and gain blessing instead of curses.

B. Feasting for fasting.

1. (18-19) The LORD says: in light of your glorious future, feasting is more appropriate than fasting.

Then the word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying, "Thus says the LORD of hosts:

**'The fast of the fourth *month*,
The fast of the fifth,
The fast of the seventh,
And the fast of the tenth,
Shall be joy and gladness and cheerful feasts
For the house of Judah.
Therefore love truth and peace.'**

a. The fast of the fourth month... shall be joy and gladness and cheerful feasts: Each one of these fast days remembered a tragic day around the fall of Jerusalem. God here promised blessing so wonderful that these mournful fasts would be transformed into **cheerful feasts** of celebration.

i. G. Campbell Morgan said of these man-appointed fasts: "None of these things had been in the purpose of God for His people; they had resulted from their sins. The fasts therefore were the result of their sins. In jealousy and fury, the outcome of love, Jehovah would put away their sins, and so restore them to true prosperity. In that day, let them still remember and observe, only let the observance be a feast in celebration of God's grace, instead of a fast in memory of their sin."

b. Therefore love truth and peace: In light of God's promised blessing, His people should want to be more like Him – they should **love truth and peace**.

2. (20-22) The LORD says: the nations will stream into Jerusalem, to seek the LORD.

"Thus says the LORD of hosts:

**'Peoples shall yet come,
Inhabitants of many cities;**

The inhabitants of one *city* shall go to another, saying,

**“Let us continue to go and pray before the LORD,
And seek the LORD of hosts.**

I myself will go also.”

Yes, many peoples and strong nations

**Shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem,
And to pray before the LORD.’**

a. **Peoples shall yet come:** In Zechariah’s day not many people wanted to come to a still ruined, downtrodden city like Jerusalem. God promised a redemption so great that one day the

peoples shall yet come to the glorified city.

b. **Yes, many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem:** This promise will ultimately be fulfilled in the millennial kingdom of Jesus. Jerusalem will be the headquarters of His kingdom, and the nations will come to **seek the LORD** in Jerusalem.

3. (23) The LORD says: God will give Israel such favor that the nations will see God is with them.

“Thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘In those days ten men from every language of the nations shall grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man, saying, “Let us go with you, for we have heard *that* God *is* with you.”’”

a. **Ten men from every language of the nations shall grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man:** This same word **grasp** is used for grabbing a snake by the tail (Exo 4:4) or for grabbing a lion by its beard (1Sa 17:35). It means to grasp something that you must not let go of.

i. “This prophecy teaches, then, that Israel will be the means of drawing the nations of the earth to the Lord

in the time of the Messiah's reign of righteousness upon earth." (Feinberg, cited in Barker)

ii. "We are all clinging to the seamless robe of that *one* Jew, Jesus of Nazareth, who because of His work on the cross is the only basis on which anyone may approach God and entreat Him for spiritual blessings." (Boice)

b. Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you: When others see that God is with us, it attracts them to the LORD. When people see *Christ in you, the hope of glory* (Col 1:27), they want to come to Jesus.

i. "God is never idle while he dwells in his people; for he cleanses away every kind of impurity, every kind of deceit, that where he dwells may ever be a holy place." (Calvin)

Judgment on Israel's Enemies

Zec 9:1 The burden of the word of Jehovah against the land of Hadrach, and its resting place, Damascus, (when the eye of man, and all the tribes of Israel shall be toward Jehovah), Zec 9:2 and Hamath also borders on it; Tyre and Sidon, though they are very wise.

Zec 9:3 And Tyre shall build a fortress for herself, and shall pile up silver like the dust, and gold like the mud of the streets.

Zec 9:4 Behold! The Lord will expel her, and He will strike her wealth in the sea, and she shall be consumed with fire.

Zec 9:5 Ashkelon shall see and fear; Gaza also shall writhe in great pain; and Ekron shall be ashamed for her hope. And the king shall perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon shall not be inhabited.

Zec 9:6 And a bastard shall dwell in Ashdod, and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines.

Zec 9:7 And I will take away his bloods out of his mouth, and his abominations from between his teeth. But the remnant, even he, shall be for our God. And he shall be as a governor in Judah, and Ekron, like a Jebusite.

Zec 9:8 And I will camp around My house because of an army, because of him who passed by, and because of him who returns. And no tyrant shall pass through them any more. For now I have seen with My eyes.

The Coming King of Zion

Zec 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King comes to you! He is righteous and victorious, lowly, and riding on an ass, even on a colt, the son of an ass.

Zec 9:10 And I Will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem. And the battle bow shall be cut off, and He shall speak peace to the nations. And His dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.

Zec 9:11 Also you, by the blood of your covenant I have freed your prisoners from the pit; no water is in it.

Zec 9:12 Turn to the stronghold, O prisoners of hope! Even today I declare I will return double to you.

Zec 9:13 For I have bent Judah for Me as a bow; I filled it with Ephraim. And I will stir up your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece, and make you as the sword of a mighty man.

The Lord Will Save His People

Zec 9:14 Then Jehovah will be seen over them, and His arrow shall go out as lightning; and the Lord Jehovah shall blow the ram's horn and shall go forth with the windstorms of the south.

Zec 9:15 Jehovah of hosts shall defend them. And they shall devour and trample on the slingstones. And they shall drink

and be boisterous, as with wine. And they shall be full like a bowl, like the corners of the altar.

Zec 9:16 And Jehovah their God shall save them in that day as the flock of His people; for they are as stones of a crown, lifted up as a barrier over His land.

Zec 9:17 For how great is its goodness, and how great its beauty! Grain shall make the young men flourish, and new wine the virgins.

Zechariah 9:1-17

Zechariah 9 – A Humble King Conquers

A. The burden against Hadrach.

1. (1-4) Judgment against the cities of Lebanon.

The burden of the word of the LORD–

Against the land of Hadrach,

And Damascus its resting place

(For the eyes of men

And all the tribes of Israel

Are on the LORD);

Also *against* Hamath, *which* borders on it,

And *against* Tyre and Sidon, though they are very wise.

For Tyre built herself a tower,

Heaped up silver like the dust,

And gold like the mire of the streets.

Behold, the LORD will cast her out;

He will destroy her power in the sea,

And she will be devoured by fire.

- a. **The burden of the word of the LORD:** The two oracles that make up the remainder of Zechariah (chapters 9 through 14) are undated, but many scholars believe they came from Zechariah's old age. Most see

this **burden... against the land of Hadrach** as fulfilled by the armies of Alexander the Great when he conquered this region. The cities mentioned in Zec 9:1-7 trace Alexander's march through the Promised Land in 332-331 B.C.

i. **The eyes of men... are on the LORD** in the sense that they were on God's instrument of judgment, Alexander

b. **Against Tyre and Sidon:** These were the two major cities north of Israel, in the land of Lebanon. **Tyre** was an important commercial city that was thought to be impossible to conquer. The Assyrians laid siege against Tyre for five years but never conquered the city. Nebuchadnezzar tried for 13 years to conquer Tyre, but Alexander did it in seven months.

i. Alexander the Great conquered Tyre by laying siege for seven months, then using the rubble from the old city to make a causeway out to the island city. It was a spectacular achievement of both military and engineering strategy.

2. (5-8) *Judgment against the cities of the Philistines.*

**Ashkelon shall see *it* and fear;
Gaza also shall be very sorrowful;
And Ekron, for He dried up her expectation.
The king shall perish from Gaza,
And Ashkelon shall not be inhabited.
"A mixed race shall settle in Ashdod,
And I will cut off the pride of the Philistines.
I will take away the blood from his mouth,
And the abominations from between his teeth.
But he who remains, even he *shall be* for our God,
And shall be like a leader in Judah,
And Ekron like a Jebusite.
I will camp around My house**

**Because of the army,
Because of him who passes by and him who returns.
No more shall an oppressor pass through them,
For now I have seen with My eyes."**

a. **Ashkelon shall see it and fear; Gaza also shall be very sorrowful:** The Philistine cities of **Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron,** and **Ashdod** are south of Tyre and Sidon, and were also conquered by Alexander the Great in 332-331 B.C.

i. This passage "accurately foretells the conquest of the eastern Mediterranean coastlands by Greek armies under the command of Alexander the Great" (Boice).

b. **He who remains... and Ekron like a Jebusite:** The Jebusites inhabited Jerusalem when David conquered the city (Jos 15:8, 2Sa 5:6-9, 2Sa 24:16-18). David did not wipe out the Jebusites, but merely incorporated them into Israel. The same would happen to the people of **Ekron**.

c. **I will camp around My house because of the army, because of him who passes by:** When Alexander the Great marched through Lebanon and the Promised Land towards Egypt he did not conquer or attack Jerusalem. God promised to protect and spare His **house** during this time, and He did through a remarkable chain of events connected to Alexander the Great and the High Priest.

i. Josephus' account of Alexander's meeting with the High Priest is fascinating (*Antiquities* 11.8.4-5):

Now Alexander, when he had taken Gaza, made haste to go up to Jerusalem; and Jaddua the high-priest, when he heard that, was in agony, and under terror, as not knowing how he should meet the

Macedonians, since the king was displeased at his foregoing disobedience. He therefore ordained that the people should make supplications, and should join with him in offering sacrifices to God, whom he besought to protect that nation, and to deliver them from the perils that were coming upon them; whereupon God warned him in a dream, which came upon him after he had offered sacrifice, that he should take courage, adorn the city, and open the gates; that the rest appear in white garments, but that he and the priests should meet the king in habits proper to their order, without the dread of any ill consequences, which the providence of God would prevent. Upon which, when he rose from his sleep, he greatly rejoiced; and declared to all the warning he had received from God. According to the dream he acted entirely, and so waited for the coming of the king.

And when he understood that he was not far from the city, he went out in procession, with the priests and the multitude of the citizens. The procession was venerable, and the manner of it different from that of other nations. It reached to a place called Sapha; which name, translated in Greek, signifies a *prospect*, for you have thence a prospect both of Jerusalem and of the temple; and when the Phoenicians and the Chaldeans that followed him, thought they should have liberty to plunder the city, and torment the high-priest to death, which the king's displeasure fairly promised them, the very reverse of it happened; for Alexander, when he saw the multitude at a distance, in white garments, while the priests stood clothed with fine linen, and the high-priest in purple and scarlet clothing, with his mitre on his head having the golden plate on which the name of God

was engraved, he approached by himself, and adored that name, and first saluted the high-priest. The Jews also did all together, with one voice, salute Alexander, and encompass him about: whereupon the kings of Syria and the rest were surprised at what Alexander had done, and supposed him to be disordered in his mind. However, Parmenio [Alexander's second-in-command] alone went up to him, and asked him how it came to pass, that when all others adored him, he should adore the high-priest of the Jews? To whom he replied, "I did not adore him, but that God who has honored him with that high-priesthood; for I saw this very person in a dream, in this very habit, when I was at Dios, in Macedonia, who, when I was considering with myself how I might obtain the dominion of Asia, exhorted me to make no delay, but boldly to pass over the sea thither, for that he would conduct my army, and would give me dominion over the Persians; whence it is, that having seen no other in that habit, and now seeing this person in it, and remembering my vision and the exhortation which I had in my dream, I believe that I bring this army under divine conduct, and shall therewith conquer Darius, and destroy the power of the Persians, and that all things will succeed according to what is in my own mind." And when he had said this to Parmenio, and had given the high-priest his right hand, the priests ran along by him, and he came into the city; and when he went up into the temple, he offered sacrifice to God, according to the high-priest's direction, and magnificently treated both the high-priest and the priests. And when the book of Daniel was showed him, wherein Daniel declared that one of the Greeks should destroy the empire of the Persians, he supposed that himself was the person intended; and as he was then glad, he dismissed the multitude

for the present, but the next day he called them to him, and bade them ask what favors they pleased of him: whereupon the high-priest desired that they might enjoy the laws of their forefathers, and might pay no tribute on the seventh year. He granted all they desired: and when they entreated him that he would permit the Jews in Babylon and Media to enjoy their own laws also, he willingly promised to do hereafter what they desired: and when he said to the multitude, that if any of them would enlist themselves in his army on this condition, that they should continue under the laws of their forefathers, and live according to them, he was willing to take them with him, many were ready to accompany him in his wars.

B. The coming King and His deliverance.

1. (9) *A lowly king comes into Jerusalem.*

**“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!
Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem!
Behold, your King is coming to you;
He *is* just and having salvation,
Lowly and riding on a donkey,
A colt, the foal of a donkey.**

a. **Behold your King is coming to you... lowly and riding on a donkey:** This Messiah-King is **lowly**, but this wasn't indicated by the animal he rode. He doesn't ride the triumphant stallion of a conquering general, but the customary mount for royalty, coming in peace. This was quite a contrast to the conqueror Alexander the Great.

i. “Brethren, *let us be lowly*. Did I hear one say, ‘Well, I will try to be lowly’? You cannot do it in that way. We must not try to act the lowly part; we must be lowly, and then we shall naturally act in a humble

manner. It is astonishing how much of pride there is in the most modest.” (Spurgeon)

ii. “How we condemn pride! We feel that it would be well if all were as humble as we are. We boast that we detest boasting. We flatter ourselves that we hate flattery. When we are told that we are singularly free from pride, we feel as proud as Lucifer himself at the consciousness that the compliment is right well deserved. We are so experienced, so solid, so discerning, so free from self-confidence, that we are the first to be caught in the net of self-satisfaction. Brethren, we must pray God to make us humble.” (Spurgeon)

b. **A donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey:** This seems to be a Hebrew expression of speech emphasizing that the animal is purebred – a truly magnificent, royal mount.

ii. “God had commanded the kings of Israel not to multiply *horses*. The kings who broke this command were miserable themselves, and scourgers to their people. Jesus came to *fulfill the law*. Had he in his title of *king* rode upon a *horse*, it would have been a *breach* of a positive command of God; therefore he rode upon an *ass*.” (Clarke)

b. **Rejoice greatly... Shout. Behold, your King is coming:** This clearly prophesies what is known as the triumphal entry of Jesus (

Mat 21:5), when He presented Himself as the Messiah to Jerusalem and the people of Israel.

i. Though the triumphal entry was a joyful celebration, a Roman spectator would wonder what was so triumphal about this entry. It didn’t compare at all to the kind of parade Julius Caesar had when he

came back to Rome from Gaul. Then there was a parade that lasted three days as he displayed all the captives and booty he brought back. In contrast to this, the procession of Jesus must have seemed pretty humble, and this showed that Jesus was a different kind of King.

2. (10) *The strength and the authority of the Messiah's reign.*

**I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim
And the horse from Jerusalem;
The battle bow shall be cut off.
He shall speak peace to the nations;
His dominion *shall be* 'from sea to sea,
And from the River to the ends of the earth.'**

a. **The battle bow shall be cut off:** Zec 9:9 belongs to the first coming of Jesus, but Zec 9:10 is associated with the Second Coming of Jesus, when He comes in power and glory to reign over this earth for 1,000 years. In that day there will be an enforced righteousness, and He will no longer allow war (Isa 2:4).

i. "Even though the Evangelists saw fulfillment of verse 9, they did not go on to quote verse 10, which may indicated that they were conscious of having only a partial fulfillment." (Baldwin)

b. **His dominion shall be "from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth":** When Jesus rules over this earth, His reign will be universal. The entire earth will be under His authority.

i. This speaks of the time many refer to as the *millennium*, the thousand-year reign of Jesus on this earth (Psalms 72, Isa 2:2-4, Isa 11:4-9, Jer 23:5-6, Luk 1:32-33; Luk 19:12-27, Mat 5:18).

3. (11-17) *Judah's liberation and blessing.*

**"As for you also,
Because of the blood of your covenant,
I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.
Return to the stronghold,
You prisoners of hope.
Even today I declare
That I will restore double to you.
For I have bent Judah, My *bow*,
Fitted the bow with Ephraim,
And raised up your sons, O Zion,
Against your sons, O Greece,
And made you like the sword of a mighty man."
Then the LORD will be seen over them,
And His arrow will go forth like lightning.
The Lord GOD will blow the trumpet,
And go with whirlwinds from the south.
The LORD of hosts will defend them;
They shall devour and subdue with slingstones.
They shall drink *and* roar as if with wine;
They shall be filled *with blood* like basins,
Like the corners of the altar.
The LORD their God will save them in that day,
As the flock of His people.
For they *shall be like* the jewels of a crown,
Lifted like a banner over His land—
For how great is its goodness
And how great its beauty!
Grain shall make the young men thrive,
And new wine the young women.**

a. **Because of the blood of your covenant:** This probably describes God acting towards Israel in light of the blood of the Covenant of Moses (Exo 24:1-8). As Israel turns to God, He will turn to them and rescue them as if they were trapped in a dry cistern (**I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit**).

b. **Return to the stronghold, you prisoners of hope:** Because of His faithful promise, even the **prisoners** are **prisoners of hope**. They should receive encouragement from His promise and **return to the stronghold** – both in the sense of a military fortress and a spiritual fortress in the LORD Himself.

c. **For I have bent Judah, My bow, fitted the bow with Ephraim, and raised up your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece:** This was partially fulfilled in the days of the Maccabees, when God raised up Jews to fight against the successors of Alexander's Empire. Nevertheless, it seems that the ultimate fulfillment of this promise is yet to come.

d. **The Lord GOD will blow the trumpet:** The idea is that the LORD Himself leads the battle. Both the Bible and the Koran have the idea of the *holy war* – which Islam calls *Jihad* – but there is a huge difference between the idea of the holy war in the Bible and in Islam. Jesus alone carries out the Biblical holy war, and never His people. In Islam, the *Jihad* is the responsibility of every good Muslim.

i. Here, God makes it clear who does the fighting:
The LORD their God will save them in that day.
This is God's battle, not the battle of men.

e. **Grain shall make the young men thrive, and new wine the young women:** As in other passages that speak of the millennium (Hos 2:21-22, Joe 2:19) here **grain** and **new wine** are pictures of prosperity and blessing.

The Restoration for Judah and Israel

Zec 10:1 Ask rain from Jehovah in the time of the latter rain. Jehovah shall make storm clouds; and He gives them showers of rain, grass to everyone in the field.

Zec 10:2 For the family idols speak iniquity, and the diviners have seen a lie and have told false dreams. They comfort in vain. On account of this, they wandered like a flock. They were troubled because there was no shepherd.

Zec 10:3 My anger is kindled against the shepherds, and I will punish the he-goats. For Jehovah of hosts has visited His flock, the house of Judah and made them as His splendid horse in battle.

Zec 10:4 From Him came the cornerstone, from Him the nail, from Him came the battle bow, and from Him every ruler together.

Zec 10:5 And they shall be like mighty ones who trample the mud of the streets in the battle. And they shall fight because Jehovah is with them, and they shall make the riders of horses ashamed.

Zec 10:6 And I will make stronger the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph. And I will bring them back again to live, for I have pity on them. And they shall be as though I had not cast them off, for I am Jehovah their God, and I will answer them.

Zec 10:7 And Ephraim shall be like a mighty one, and their heart shall be glad as by wine. And their sons shall see and be glad; their heart shall rejoice in Jehovah.

Zec 10:8 I will whistle for them and gather them, for I have redeemed them. And they shall multiply as they were multiplied.

Zec 10:9 And I will sow them among the peoples, and they shall remember Me in far countries, and they shall live with their sons and return.

Zec 10:10 And I will return to save them out of the land of Egypt and gather them out of Assyria. And I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon, for room shall not be found for them.

Zec 10:11 And He shall pass through the sea of distress and strike the waves in the sea, and all the depths of the Nile shall dry up. And the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, and the scepter of Egypt shall go away.

Zec 10:12 And I will make them strong in Jehovah, and they shall walk up and down in His name, says Jehovah.

Zechariah 10:1-12

Zechariah 10 – A Promise to Gather Israel

A. The superiority of the Messiah's reign.

1. (1) The blessed nature of the Messiah's reign.

Ask the LORD for rain

In the time of the latter rain.

The LORD will make flashing clouds;

He will give them showers of rain,

Grass in the field for everyone.

a. **Ask the LORD for rain in the time of the latter rain:** Ancient Israel had no irrigation system, and relied on rain to water their crops. In a time of drought, nothing grew – so Israel relied on both the *former rain* (falling in autumn) and the **latter rain** (falling in spring).

b. **He will give them showers of rain:** The LORD challenged His people saying, "Be bold enough to ask Me, and I will answer your prayer. I will provide what I alone can provide."

c. **Grass in the field for everyone:** In man's ideas of equality, often everyone ends up equally poor. God's idea of equality means abundance for everyone.

2. (2-5) Only the people of the true God conquer in the end

For the idols speak delusion;

The diviners envision lies,

And tell false dreams;
They comfort in vain.
Therefore *the people* wend their way like sheep;
They are in trouble because *there is* no shepherd.
“My anger is kindled against the shepherds,
And I will punish the goatherds.
For the LORD of hosts will visit His flock,
The house of Judah,
And will make them as His royal horse in the battle.
From him comes the cornerstone,
From him the tent peg,
From him the battle bow,
From him every ruler together.
They shall be like mighty men,
Who tread down *their enemies*
In the mire of the streets in the battle.
They shall fight because the LORD is with them,
And the riders on horses shall be put to shame.”

a. **For the idols speak delusion; the diviners envision lies:** The ancient Hebrew word for **idols** here is *teraphim*, meaning common household idols. **Diviners** consulted the spirits of idols to predict the future. God warns His people that there is no real help from either idols or their representatives (**they comfort in vain**).

b. **They are in trouble because there is no shepherd:** The people had listened to false and deceptive leaders, and part of the reason was because there was a lack of godly leadership.

c. **Will make them as His royal horse in the battle:** In mercy God would transform His people from a **flock** of sheep to a herd of war horses, ready for **battle**. All of them shall **be like mighty men** and defeat their enemies.

d. **From him comes the cornerstone, from him the tent peg, from him the battle bow, from him every ruler together:** Though God was displeased with Israel's shepherds, He would raise up the perfect shepherd from Judah and for Judah.

i. Jesus is the **cornerstone**: the foundation, measure, and standard (Isa 28:16, Psa 118:22-23, Mat 21:42, Act 4:11, 1Pe 2:4-5).

ii. Jesus is the **tent peg**: holding all things securely (Isa 22:23-24).

iii. Jesus is the **battle bow**: a strong fighter for good (Isa 63:1-4, Rev 19:11-16).

iv. Jesus is the leader over **every ruler** of His people (Rev 19:16).

B. Israel gathered and strengthened

1. (6-8) Israel strengthened.

**"I will strengthen the house of Judah,
And I will save the house of Joseph.
I will bring them back,
Because I have mercy on them.
They shall be as though I had not cast them aside;
For I *am* the LORD their God,
And I will hear them.
Those of Ephraim shall be like a mighty man,
And their heart shall rejoice as if with wine.
Yes, their children shall see *it* and be glad;
Their heart shall rejoice in the LORD."**

a. **I will strengthen the house of Judah**: The promise from the preceding passage is repeated more intensely. God will save and bless Israel, and **have mercy on them**. This blessing would include *all* of the tribes of Israel, even **the house of Joseph** (those of the conquered northern kingdom).

i. God has strength for us also. Eph 6:10 tells us that we can draw on His resources for strength: *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.*

ii. The availability of God's strength means there will be opportunities for us to use it. "The Lord does not say, 'I will take you away from your labors,' but 'I will strengthen you, so that you will be able to perform, them.' " (Spurgeon)

b. **Their children shall see it and be glad; their heart shall rejoice in the LORD:** The LORD will not only return strength to Israel, but also *joy*. Their sense of defeat and weakness will be replaced with gladness.

2. (9-12) *Israel gathered into the land from across the earth.*

**"I will whistle for them and gather them,
For I will redeem them;
And they shall increase as they once increased.
I will sow them among the peoples,
And they shall remember Me in far countries;
They shall live, together with their children,
And they shall return.
I will also bring them back from the land of Egypt,
And gather them from Assyria.
I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon,
Until no *more room* is found for them.
He shall pass through the sea with affliction,
And strike the waves of the sea:
All the depths of the River shall dry up.
Then the pride of Assyria shall be brought down,
And the scepter of Egypt shall depart.
So I will strengthen them in the LORD,
And they shall walk up and down in His name,"
Says the LORD.**

a. **I will whistle for them and gather them:** The promise to **gather** Israel is repeated often in the prophecies of New Covenant (Deu 30:1-6, Jer 23:1-8, Jer 32:37-41, Eze 11:16-20, Eze 36:16-28). Though Israel was scattered to the nations, **they shall remember Me in far countries** and come back to the land.

i. In the 20th Century many Jewish people were gathered back to the land of Israel, and in 1948 Israel became a nation again – after more than 2,000 years of not being a nation. Does the 20th Century gathering of Israel fulfill this prophecy? It fulfills it in part, but only in part – because Israel will be gathered again in belief, not in rejection of the LORD and His Savior. The gathering began in unbelief, but will end up in belief and trust in Jesus.

b. **So I will strengthen them in the LORD, and they shall walk up and down in His name:** When God gathers Israel and defeats their enemies they shall walk in freedom and liberty again. It will be like a new exodus from Egypt, complete with exodus-like miracles (**He shall pass through the sea with affliction, and strike the waves of the sea: All the depths of the River shall dry up**).

The Flock Doomed to Slaughter

Zec 11:1 Open your doors, O Lebanon, so that the fire may devour your cedars.

Zec 11:2 Howl, fir tree, for the cedar has fallen, because the majestic trees have been destroyed. Howl, O oaks of Bashan, for the inaccessible forest has come down.

Zec 11:3 A voice of the wailing of the shepherds is heard , for their splendor is destroyed. A voice of the roaring of young lions is heard , for the pride of Jordan is destroyed.

Zec 11:4 For so says Jehovah my God: Feed the flock of the slaughter.

Zec 11:5 Those who buy them kill them and are not held guilty. And those who sell them say, Blessed be Jehovah, for I am rich. And their shepherds do not pity them.

Zec 11:6 For I will never again pity the inhabitants of the land, says Jehovah. But, lo, I will make the men fall, each one into his neighbor's hand, and into his king's hand. And they shall strike the land, and I will not deliver out of their hand.

Zec 11:7 And I fed the flock of slaughter, the truly poor of the flock. And I took two staffs for Myself: the one I called Kindness, and the other I called Union. And I fed the flock.

Zec 11:8 I also cut off three shepherds in one month. And My soul despised them, and their soul also detested Me.

Zec 11:9 Then I said, I will not feed you; that which dies, let it die; and that which is to be cut off, let it be cut off. And let the rest eat, each woman the flesh of her neighbor.

Zec 11:10 And I took My staff Kindness and broke it apart, to break My covenant which I had cut with all the peoples.

Zec 11:11 And it was broken in that day, and so the poor of the flock who were watching Me knew that it was the word of Jehovah.

Zec 11:12 And I said to them, If it is good in your eyes, give My price; and if not, let it go. And they weighed My price, thirty pieces of silver.

Zec 11:13 And Jehovah said to Me, Throw it to the potter, the magnificent price at which I was valued by them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw it to the potter in the house of Jehovah.

Zec 11:14 Then I broke apart My second staff Union, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

Zec 11:15 And Jehovah said to me, Again take to yourself the instruments of a foolish shepherd.

Zec 11:16 For, lo, I will raise up a shepherd in the land; he shall not visit those who are cut off, nor will he seek the young, nor will he heal that which is broken, nor will he sustain that which stands. But he shall eat the flesh of the fat, and tear off their hoofs.

Zec 11:17 Woe to the worthless shepherd who abandons the flock! The sword shall be against his arm and against his right eye. His arm shall be completely withered, and his right eye shall be totally darkened.

Zechariah 11:1-17

Zechariah 11 – Thirty Pieces of Silver

A. Judgment coming on God's flock.

1. (1-3) Creation mourns because of coming judgment.

**Open your doors, O Lebanon,
That fire may devour your cedars.
Wail, O cypress, for the cedar has fallen,
Because the mighty *trees* are ruined.
Wail, O oaks of Bashan,
For the thick forest has come down.
There is the sound of wailing shepherds!
For their glory is in ruins.
There is the sound of roaring lions!
For the pride of the Jordan is in ruins.**

a. **Open your doors, O Lebanon, that fire may devour your cedars:** This describes the coming of destructive armies of judgment from the north, through Lebanon. The **doors** of Lebanon are the mountain passes between Lebanon and Israel.

i. Boice comments on how this prophecy was fulfilled in the Roman campaign against Judea. "These verses might have described the Babylonian invasion if they

had been written earlier; but that was past history by Zechariah's time. There is nothing in the history of the people that a comprehensive destruction of the land can refer to prior to the terrible destruction ordered by Vespasian and his successor Titus."

b. **Wail, O cypress, for the cedar has fallen:** The cedar trees illustrate Lebanon's strength. Once they fall the lesser forests of **cypress** and **oak** will also be destroyed, so they also **wail**.

c. **Wailing shepherds... roaring lions:** In addition to the trees, the **shepherds** and **lions** also mourn because of judgment on the land – coming because Israel has rejected the Good Shepherd.

2. (4-7) *Zechariah acts out a prophecy of judgment.*

Thus says the LORD my God, "Feed the flock for slaughter, whose owners slaughter them and feel no guilt; those who sell them say, 'Blessed be the LORD, for I am rich'; and their shepherds do not pity them. For I will no longer pity the inhabitants of the land," says the LORD. "But indeed I will give everyone into his neighbor's hand and into the hand of his king. They shall attack the land, and I will not deliver *them* from their hand." So I fed the flock for slaughter, in particular the poor of the flock. I took for myself two staffs: the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bonds; and I fed the flock.

a. **Feed the flock for slaughter:** Zechariah acted out this prophecy, feeding a literal flock of sheep that represented the people of God. As the shepherd, Zechariah represented the LORD who had appointed this flock for a season of judgment.

b. **I took for myself two staffs:** Zechariah's **two staffs** were named "**Beauty**" (*grace*) and "**Bonds**"

(*unity*). The staff was a common tool for a shepherd (Psa 23:4).

- i. "*Favor* symbolizes the favored status of Israel as the chosen people of God. *Union* symbolizes the internal harmony of the people that was lost at the time of the siege of Jerusalem." (Boice)

3. (8-11) *The covenant symbolically broken.*

I dismissed the three shepherds in one month. My soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me. Then I said, "I will not feed you. Let what is dying die, and what is perishing perish. Let those that are left eat each other's flesh." And I took my staff, Beauty, and cut it in two, that I might break the covenant which I had made with all the peoples. So it was broken on that day. Thus the poor of the flock, who were watching me, knew that it was the word of the LORD.

- a. **I dismissed the three shepherds in one month:** We know that Zechariah was acting prophetically, but it is hard to identify these **three shepherds** whom Zechariah hated, and who hated him.

- i. "The best explanation is probably the oldest, which sees the three shepherds not as three individuals but as three classes of individuals, namely: the prophets, priests, and kings of Israel" (Boice). The offices of prophet, priest, and king were taken away from Israel after the Roman conquest of Judea and have never been restored – because they are now fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

- b. **I will not feed you. Let what is dying die:** In bringing judgment by letting the *dying die*, God merely took away His hand of protection. At one time God had a **covenant** with **all the peoples**, preventing them from

attacking His people Israel. When God decided to **break the covenant**, His people would be attacked.

c. **Let those who are left eat each other's flesh**: This really happened during the Roman siege of Jerusalem in A.D. 70

d. **The poor of the flock.. knew that it was the word of the LORD**: These were the faithful remnant who knew that even these hard words were from God.

4. (12-14) *The shepherd is paid with contempt.*

Then I said to them, "If it is agreeable to you, give me my wages; and if not, refrain." So they weighed out for my wages thirty *pieces* of silver. And the LORD said to me, "Throw it to the potter"; that princely price they set on me. So I took the thirty *pieces* of silver and threw them into the house of the LORD for the potter. Then I cut in two my other staff, Bonds, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

a. **Give me my wages**: Zechariah was "play-acting" this prophecy, employing himself as a shepherd over a flock. Now he asked his employer for his wages, and **they weighed out for my wages thirty pieces of silver**.

b. **That princely price they set on me**: Zechariah spoke sarcastically here. **Thirty pieces of silver** was not an insignificant amount, but it was the price of a slave (Exo 21:32). It was the lowest they could pay, and it said that they regarded Zechariah as a slave.

i. This speaks prophetically of Jesus, who was contemptuously betrayed for **thirty pieces of silver** (Mat 26:15; Mat 27:3) – the price of a slave.

ii. Mat 27:9-10 says: *Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the value of Him who*

was priced, whom they of the children of Israel priced, and gave them for the potter's field, as the LORD directed me." This is a problem because clearly Zechariah records the passage mentioned in Mat 27:9-10. There are generally three solutions offered for this problem:

- Some think it is an error but not by Matthew – an early copyist made a mistake. Perhaps Matthew wrote *Zechariah*, but an early copyist put *Jeremiah* instead.
- Some think that Jeremiah spoke this prophecy and Zechariah recorded it. This may be the word spoken by Jeremiah, but *recorded* by Zechariah.
- Some think that Matthew refers to *scroll* of Jeremiah, which included the book of Zechariah.

c. **Threw them into the house of the LORD for the potter:** Curiously, Zechariah said that the thirty pieces of silver were thrown **into the house of the LORD** but that they were also given to the **potter**. This is an exact fulfillment of what Judas did with his thirty pieces of silver (Mat 27:3-10).

i. The money to betray Jesus – His purchase price – went to buy a potter's field (Mat 27:7). A potter's field was a piece of useless land where the potter threw his broken, damaged, and rejected pots. Jesus really did purchase the potter's field – the place where broken, rejected, and useless people like us are scattered.

d. **Then I cut in two my other staff, Bonds, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel:** After the exchange of the thirty pieces of silver the staff of **Bonds** (unity) was broken. This was fulfilled when Israel was scattered by the Romans after their rejection of their Shepherd Jesus.

B. A false shepherd to come.

1. (15-16) God will allow foolish shepherds to come to His people.

And the LORD said to me, "Next, take for yourself the implements of a foolish shepherd. For indeed I will raise up a shepherd in the land *who* will not care for those who are cut off, nor seek the young, nor heal those that are broken, nor feed those that still stand. But he will eat the flesh of the fat and tear their hooves in pieces."

a. Take for yourself the implements of a foolish shepherd: Now Zechariah play-acted as a **foolish shepherd** who did not care for the sheep the way that a shepherd should.

- The foolish shepherd **will not care for those who are cut off** but a wise and godly shepherd will seek the lost.
- The foolish shepherd will not **seek the young** but a wise and godly shepherd knows that **the young** need to come to the LORD as much as older people do.
- The foolish shepherd will not **heal those that are broken** but a wise and godly shepherd looks for broken hearts and lives and mends them with God's love and word.
- The foolish shepherd will not **feed those that still stand** but a wise and godly shepherd will faithfully feed the sheep.
- The foolish shepherd will **eat the flesh of the fat and tear their hooves in pieces** but a wise and godly shepherd will lay down his life for the sheep (Joh 10:11).

b. **I will raise up a shepherd in the land:** This foolish shepherd was allowed and appointed by God as judgment because His people forsook the true shepherd. This was fulfilled in Israel's rejection of Jesus. They rejected the Good Shepherd (Joh 10:1-18) but received another shepherd (Joh 5:43).

i. We often assume all that people need is the right leader. Here we see that even the ultimate leader may be rejected and a worthless leader chosen. Democracy's value is that it respects man's fallen nature and spreads out power – yet the majority *may be* very, very wrong and prefer a **foolish shepherd** instead of the Good Shepherd.

ii. The **foolish shepherd** embraced by Israel was partially fulfilled in their choice of Barabbas (Mat 27:20-22) but will be ultimately fulfilled in their embrace of Antichrist and their covenant with him (Dan 9:27).

2. (17) *Judgment on the worthless shepherd.*

**"Woe to the worthless shepherd,
Who leaves the flock!
A sword *shall be* against his arm
And against his right eye;
His arm shall completely wither,
And his right eye shall be totally blinded."**

a. **Woe to the worthless shepherd:** Though God appointed the foolish shepherd in light of Israel's rejection of the Good Shepherd, it does not mean that God approves of the foolish shepherd. God will judge that **worthless shepherd** who injured His **flock**.

b. **A sword shall be against his arm and against his right eye:** The worthless shepherd feels the sword of God's judgment against

his arm and **his right eye**. The **arm** expresses strength and the **eye** expresses intelligence, so this will be a harsh blow against the worthless shepherd.

i. Rev 13:3; Rev 13:12-14 tell us the Antichrist will suffer a severe wound yet survive. This confirms that the **worthless shepherd** is ultimately fulfilled in the Antichrist.

The Lord Will Give Salvation

Zec 12:1 The burden of the word of Jehovah for Israel, says Jehovah, who stretches forth the heavens, and lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man in his midst.

Zec 12:2 Behold! I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling to all the peoples all around, and it shall also be against Judah in the siege against Jerusalem.

Zec 12:3 And in that day I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it shall be slashed. And all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it.

Zec 12:4 In that day I will strike every horse with panic and his rider with madness, says Jehovah. And I will open My eyes on the house of Judah, and I will strike every horse of the peoples with blindness.

Zec 12:5 And the leaders of Judah shall say in their heart, The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be my strength in Jehovah of hosts, their God.

Zec 12:6 In that day I will make the leaders of Judah like a hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire among cut grain. And they shall devour all the peoples all around, on the right hand and on the left hand. And Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her place, in Jerusalem.

Zec 12:7 Jehovah also shall save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the

inhabitants of Jerusalem may not be magnified above Judah.
Zec 12:8 In that day Jehovah shall protect around the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And it will be, he who is feeble among them in that day shall be like David, and the house of David shall be like God, like the Angel of Jehovah before them.

Zec 12:9 And it shall be in that day, I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

Him Whom They Have Pierced

Zec 12:10 And I will pour on the house of David, and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of prayers. And they shall look on Me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son , and they shall be bitter over Him, like the bitterness over the first-born.

Zec 12:11 In that day the mourning in Jerusalem shall be great, like the mourning of Hadad-rimmon in the valley of Megiddo.

Zec 12:12 And the land shall mourn, each family apart: the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart;

Zec 12:13 the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart;

Zec 12:14 all the families who remain, each family apart, and their wives apart.

Zechariah 12:1-14

Zechariah 12 – Mourning for The Pierced One

A. God defends Israel against her enemies.

1. (1-4) God supernaturally defends Israel against attack.

The burden of the word of the LORD against Israel. Thus says the LORD, who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him: "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it. In that day," says the LORD, "I will strike every horse with confusion, and its rider with madness; I will open My eyes on the house of Judah, and will strike every horse of the peoples with blindness."

a. Thus says the LORD, who stretches out the heavens: The section begins with praise for God's creative power, reminding us that He is in control and completely able to accomplish what He predicts.

b. I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples: God says that in a coming day Jerusalem will intoxicate and stupefy the **surrounding peoples**. The Arab peoples surrounding Jerusalem have a passion for possessing the city that is not justified by history.

i. Muslims claim Jerusalem as their third-holiest city, but Jerusalem is not mentioned once in the Koran. In addition, "During the centuries when Jerusalem was under complete Arab control, no Arab ruler or Islamic leader ever made it the object of a religious pilgrimage – again a strange indifference toward a city which is now considered to be the third-holiest religious site in Islam after Mecca and Medina" (Dave Hunt).

ii. Jerusalem's importance to Muslims comes from the belief that in the Dome of the Rock shrine there is a rock where two significant things happened – where Abraham intended to offer Isaac as a sacrifice, and where Mohammed allegedly ascended into heaven. Though this tradition is firmly in the Muslim mind, it is of recent origin. It was invented by Yasser Arafat's uncle – Haj Amin el-Husseini, who was the past Grand Mufti of Jerusalem. He promoted this myth in the 1920's and 1930's to arouse Arab passions against the growing Jewish presence in Jerusalem.

iii. The verse in the Koran that describes Mohammed's trip to heaven is Surah 17:1: *Glorified be He who carried His servant by night from the Inviolable Place of Worship to the Far Distant Place [al-Aqsa] of Worship the neighbourhood whereof We have blessed, that We might show him of Our tokens!* The Islamic interpretation says that the *Inviolable Place of Worship* is Mecca, and this is accepted by all. It then says that the *Far Distant Place of Worship* is Jerusalem – but this has no substantiation because Jerusalem had never been a place of Islamic worship to that time, nor would it be for centuries afterward. Jerusalem isn't even mentioned by name in the Koran, so how could it be a place of worship according to the Koran? Most significantly, inside the Dome of the Rock hundreds of verses from the Koran are inscribed – *and Surah 17:1 is not among them!* The very passage that later supposedly justified the building of the Dome of the Rock is not even included among the hundreds of passages of the Koran inscribed in it!

iv. The Dome of the Rock was built not because of the Koran, but because the Muslim ruler Abdal-Malik wanted to gain revenue from pilgrims and

worshippers, and because he wanted to prevent the rebuilding of a Jewish Temple. Islamic passion for Jerusalem is indeed like **drunkenness**.

v. This is *exactly* fulfilled in modern Jerusalem. In recent peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, Israel was willing to concede almost everything to the Palestinians in an amazing willingness to make peace. The only thing Israel would not concede was *sovereignty over Jerusalem*, and the entire deal was ruined over that one point. The problem between Jews and the Arab world has boiled down to one point: Jerusalem.

vi. If Muslim passion for Jerusalem is a mystery, the Jewish claim to the city is entirely Scriptural. "The very fact that Jerusalem is mentioned more than 800 times in the Bible makes it worthy of special attention. This unique city is the only one upon which God has bestowed His distinctive blessing and protection (Psa 132:13-14), and the only city for whose peace we are commanded to pray (Psa 122:6). God says He has chosen Jerusalem as the place where He has put His name forever (2Ch 6:6; 2Ch 33:7; Psa 46:4; Psa 48:1-8; Psa 87:3). The new heavens and new earth will contain 'the city of my God...new Jerusalem' (Rev 3:12; Rev 21:2). That there will be a 'heavenly Jerusalem' (Heb 12:22) but no 'heavenly' New York, Paris, London, Damascus, Cairo, etc. speaks volumes" (Dave Hunt, *The Berean Call* – September 2000).

c. **I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples:** If Jerusalem will be a **cup of drunkenness to all her surrounding peoples**, it will be a **heavy stone** – a burden – **for all peoples**, presenting a problem that

cannot be solved (**all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces**).

i. "Consider how remarkable even this one prophecy is. Who could have imagined when the Old Testament was written that all the nations of the world would be involved in deciding the fate of Israel? And this involvement of all nations in dividing Israel has occurred exactly as prophesied and is still in the process of being implemented." (Dave Hunt)

d. **I will open My eyes on the house of Judah, and will strike every horse of the peoples with blindness:** Though the nations come against Jerusalem with fury, God will protect her. This will find an ultimate fulfillment in the Battle of Armageddon, but we may see an earlier fulfillment any day now.

2. (5-9) *God supernaturally empowers His people.*

"And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, 'The inhabitants of Jerusalem *are* my strength in the LORD of hosts, their God.' In that day I will make the governors of Judah like a firepan in the woodpile, and like a fiery torch in the sheaves; they shall devour all the surrounding peoples on the right hand and on the left, but Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place; Jerusalem. The LORD will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall not become greater than that of Judah. In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; the one who is feeble among them in that day shall be like David, and the house of David *shall be* like God, like the Angel of the LORD before them. It shall be in that day *that* I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem."

a. **I will make the governors of Judah like a firepan in the woodpile:** In that day God will deliver Israel not only through His direct work, but also through blessing and empowering both the **governors** and **inhabitants** of Jerusalem. They will be supernaturally empowered by God to defend the city.

b. **In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; the one who is feeble among them in that day shall be like David:** King David was renowned for his fighting ability, courage, and success. God promised a day when the *weakest* in Jerusalem will be as mighty as David – and the leaders could only be compared in might to **God!**

B. God gives Israel a spirit of humble repentance.

1. (10) Mourning for the pierced One.

“And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for *his* only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.”

a. **And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication:** Part of this great outpouring of strength and might to defend Jerusalem will be an outpouring of the **Spirit** – but for **grace and supplication**. God will move among Israel and bring saving grace and repentant prayer.

b. **Then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son:** As Jerusalem is supernaturally defended and the Spirit is poured out on the nation, *they will turn to Jesus*, the **pierced** One. His head was **pierced** with

thorns, His hands and feet were **pierced** with nails, and a spear **pierced** His side.

i. **They will look:** They will turn away from their trust in the foolish, worthless shepherd and turn their focus on the Good Shepherd. When we see Jesus crucified – understanding why He went to the cross and what He accomplished there – we are drawn to Him in humble repentance (Joh 12:32).

ii. They will look on Him **whom they pierced**. They will realize that **they** did it, and that they bear responsibility – not sole responsibility, but responsibility nonetheless – for the crucifixion of their Savior.

iii. **They will mourn:** The Jewish people will turn to Jesus in repentance, mourning their past rejection of Him. The mourning will be deep, as if for an **only son**, the **firstborn**. **Firstborn** was synonymous with the most beloved.

iv. This will fulfill the amazing promise of Rom 11:26 (*And so Israel will be saved*) and many other passages that tell us that before the physical return of Jesus to this earth, the Jewish people – as a whole – will welcome Him as their Lord and Savior. The whole context of Zechariah 12 puts this radical conversion in the setting of miraculous deliverance from an attack from the nations.

c. **They will look... they will mourn:** Here we see the pattern for coming to Jesus and true repentance. *First* we look to Jesus, *then* we mourn for our sins. *Looking to Jesus must come first.*

i. "A great mistake is very common among all classes of men – it is currently believed that we are first of all to mourn for our sins, and then to look by faith to our

Lord Jesus Christ. Most persons who have any concern about their souls, but are not as yet enlightened by the Spirit of God, think that there is a degree of tenderness of conscience, and of hatred of sin, which they are to obtain somehow or other, and then they will be permitted and authorized to look to Jesus Christ. Now you will perceive that this is not according to the Scripture, for, according to the text before us. men first look upon him whom they have pierced, and then, but not till then, they mourn for their sin." (Spurgeon)

ii. "It is a beautiful remark of an old divine, that eyes are made for two things at least; first, to look with, and next, to weep with. The eye which looks to the pierced One is the eye which weeps for him." (Spurgeon)

d. **They will look upon Me:** Comparing Zec 12:10 with Zec 12:1; Zec 12:3 (*Thus says the LORD... says the LORD*) makes it clear that the **Me** they look upon is the LORD God – Yahweh – Himself. This is astounding and wonderful evidence that Jesus the **pierced** One is God, and that Yahweh is the Triune God.

i. Simply said, the Father sends the Spirit so that men would look upon the Son.

2. (11-14) *The great mourning of repentance.*

"In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning at Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo. And the land shall mourn, every family by itself: the family of the house of David by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Levi by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of Shimei by itself, and their wives by themselves; all the

families that remain, every family by itself, and their wives by themselves."

a. **A great mourning in Jerusalem:** The repentance that comes to Israel in that day will be like a **great mourning**, the ultimate fulfillment of the Day of Atonement, the day of national mourning over their greatest sin – rejecting Jesus.

b. **Like the mourning at Hadad Rimmon:** This refers to the mourning over King Josiah's death (2Ki 23:29 and 2Ch 35:20-25). He was such a godly king that the whole nation wept bitterly at his death.

c. **And the land shall mourn, every family by itself:** This indicates there will be both great *individual* repentance and great *corporate* repentance. It seems fantastic to us that Israel as a whole would turn to Jesus and repent of their sin of rejecting their Savior – it is so amazing that we would not believe it unless the Bible so clearly taught it.

i. "We know of a surety, because God has said it, that the Jews will be restored to their own land, and that they shall inherit the goodly country which the Lord has given unto their fathers by a covenant of salt for ever; but, better still, they shall be converted to the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, and shall see in him the house of David restored to the throne of Israel."
(Spurgeon)

Zec 13:1 In that day a fountain shall be opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for impurity.

Idolatry Cut Off

Zec 13:2 And it shall be in that day, I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall be remembered

no more, says Jehovah of hosts. And I also will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.

Zec 13:3 And it shall be when any shall prophesy again, his father and his mother who gave him birth shall say to him then, You shall not live, for you speak lies in the name of Jehovah. And his father and his mother who gave him birth shall pierce him when he prophesies.

Zec 13:4 And it shall be in that day, the prophets shall be ashamed, each one of his vision when he prophesies, and they shall not wear a hairy garment to deceive.

Zec 13:5 But he shall say, I am not a prophet; I am a man, a tiller of the ground, for a man caused me to buy from my youth.

Zec 13:6 And one shall say to him, What are these wounds between your hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was struck in the house of those who love me.

The Shepherd Struck

Zec 13:7 O sword, awake against My Shepherd, and against the Man who is My companion, says Jehovah of hosts. Strike the Shepherd and the sheep will be scattered. And I will turn My hand against the little ones.

Zec 13:8 And it shall be in all the land, says Jehovah, two parts in it shall be cut off and perish, but the third shall be left in it.

Zec 13:9 And I will bring the third part through the fire, and I will refine them as silver is refined. And I will try them as gold is tried. They shall call on My name, and I will answer them. I will say, It is My people, and they shall say, Jehovah is my God.

Zechariah 13:1-9

Zechariah 13 – The Nation Purified

A. The purification of the people

1. (1) *A fountain to cleanse sin.*

“In that day a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.”

a. **In that day:** Zechariah 12 ended with Israel’s return to the LORD through the once rejected but now embraced Messiah. Flowing from their embrace of the Messiah, they would then enjoy **a fountain** of cleansing **for sin and for uncleanness**. The cleansing comes after their mourning for the One whom they have pierced.

i. **Shall be opened:** “The fountain shall be not simply opened, but shall remain open.” (Pusey)

ii. “The idea of God being a fountain to His people is found frequently in the Old Testament, but Zechariah’s treatment is possibly the richest of all.” (Boice)

iii. The idea of the sin-cleansing fountain has also been a part of famous hymns:

*There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel’s veins;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.*

(William Cowper)

*Foul, I to the Fountain fly;
Wash me, Saviour, or I die.
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee.*

(Augustus Toplady)

iv. “According to the verse before us this provision is inexhaustible. There is a *fountain* opened; not a

cistern nor a reservoir, but a fountain. A fountain continues still to bubble up, and is as full after fifty years as at the first; and even so the provision and the mercy of God for the forgiveness and the justification of our souls continually flows and overflows." (Spurgeon)

v. "The means by which sin and sinfulness can be put away are at this moment accessible to the sons of men. The atonement is not a fountain hid and concealed, and closed and barred and bolted, it is a fountain open." (Spurgeon)

b. **For sin and for uncleanness:** The only thing that can cleanse **sin and uncleanness** is God's **fountain**. It is His supply, and nothing else can cleanse. Our own works at reform or restitution can't cleanse us; our past, present, or promised works can't cleanse – only His **fountain**.

i. "Sin and uncleanness must be put away. They cannot be excused, condoned, or compromised with. The foundations of the throne of God are righteousness and justice." (Morgan)

2. (2-6) *Cleansing from idolatry and false prophets.*

"It shall be in that day," says the LORD of hosts, "that I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they shall no longer be remembered. I will also cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to depart from the land. It shall come to pass that if anyone still prophesies, then his father and mother who begot him will say to him, 'You shall not live, because you have spoken lies in the name of the LORD.' And his father and mother who begot him shall thrust him through when he prophesies. And it shall be in that day that every prophet will be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies; they will not wear a robe of

coarse hair to deceive. But he will say, 'I *am* no prophet, I *am* a farmer; for a man taught me to keep cattle from my youth.' And *one* will say to him, 'What are these wounds between your arms?' Then he will answer, '*Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.*'"

a. **I will cut off the names of the idols... I will also cause the prophets and unclean spirits to depart from the land:** Idolatry and false prophecy were the two main ways Israel was led astray from God. God would not only provide a fountain to cleanse, but He also promised to cut off the source of uncleanness – in this case, idolatry and false prophecy.

i. The gaudy and ornate shrines that supposedly mark holy sites in Israel today are evidence that idolatry is still alive and well in the Holy Land. God promised to cleanse the land from such idolatry completely.

ii. **They shall no longer be remembered:** God promises ultimately to take away even the *memory* of our sin.

b. **His father and mother who begot him shall thrust him through when he prophesies:** Zechariah prophesied a coming day when public opinion would not tolerate false prophets. There would be such a commitment to the LORD and His truth that even the family of a false prophet would condemn the false prophet.

c. **Every prophet will be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies:** Those who had been false messengers of God would be **ashamed** of their message. They will put away the clothing of the prophets (**a robe of coarse hair**) and earn an honest living.

i. "Those who posed as prophets will so fear exposure that they will deny ever having made such a claim."
(Baldwin)

ii. This does not say that true prophecy will cease; but only those who **deceive** have **spoken lies in the name of the LORD**.

d. **Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends:** The man accused of being a false prophet insists the scars on his body are not the self-inflicted wounds often associated with false prophets, but merely the result of a brawl in his friend's house.

i. The unlikely, ironic explanation shows just how desperately people will avoid being identified with false prophets in this coming day Zechariah speaks of.

ii. It wasn't unusual for false prophets to wound or mutilate themselves in the service of idols (1Ki 18:28, Jer 48:37).

e. **I was wounded in the house of my friends:** Some take this as another Messianic prophecy in Zechariah, because Jesus was clearly **wounded** by those who should have been His **friends**. Nevertheless the context and the original Hebrew argue against this referring to Jesus and His wounds.

i. The translation from the King James Version makes it seem even more likely that this refers to Jesus: *What are these wounds in thine hands?* But the Hebrew is more literally *between your hands*, that is on the body, whether the chest or the back.

ii. "Some apply this to Christ, because Zechariah has mentioned wounds on the hands; but this is very puerile; for it is quite evident that he speaks here of false teachers, who had for a time falsely pretended God's name." (Calvin)

iii. "I do not think that these words are spoken at all concerning Jesus Christ. I have heard them quoted this way; but I cannot hear such an application of them without horror." (Clarke)

B. The Shepherd struck, the nation scattered.

1. (7) *Striking the Man Who is the Companion of the LORD.*

**"Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd,
Against the Man who is My Companion,"
Says the LORD of hosts.**

**"Strike the Shepherd,
And the sheep will be scattered;
Then I will turn My hand against the little ones."**

a. **Against My Shepherd:** In the context, and especially in light of the quotation of this passage in Mat 26:31, we understand that the **Shepherd** is Jesus the Messiah – and it is God the Father Himself who calls for the **Shepherd** to be struck.

i. Zechariah relates a thought also stated in Isa 53:10 : *Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief.* The prophets Isaiah and Zechariah gloriously and emphatically, state that the LORD ordained the Servant of the LORD's suffering. This was *God's doing!* He gave the command to **strike the Shepherd**. Jesus was no victim of circumstance or at the mercy of political or military power. It was the planned, ordained work of the LORD God, prophesied by Isaiah hundreds of years before it happened. This was *God's victory*, not Satan's or man's triumph.

ii. As Paul says in 2Co 5:19, *God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself.* The Father and the Son worked together at the cross. Though Jesus was *treated* as if He were an enemy of God, He was not.

Even as Jesus was punished as if He were a sinner, He was performing the most holy service unto God the Father ever offered.

b. **The Man who is My Companion:** The ancient Hebrew word for **My Companion** is used in Lev 6:2; Lev 18:20 to mean a "near neighbor." According to Baldwin, this describes someone who is more than a *friend* of the LORD; this **Shepherd** "dwells side by side with the Lord, His equal."

i. "God would not apply this epithet to any godly or ungodly man whom he might have appointed shepherd over a nation. The idea of nearest one (or fellow) involves not only similarity in vocation, but community of physical or spiritual descent, according to which he whom God calls his neighbor cannot be a mere man, but can only be one who participates in the divine nature, or is essentially divine." (Keil)

c. **Strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered:** Jesus quoted this phrase from Zec 13:7 in Mat 26:31 in reference to the scattering of His disciples during His arrest and suffering. There is also a sense in which the disciples were a type of Israel as a whole in being scattered.

2. (8-9) *Israel scattered, smitten, refined, and saved.*

**"And it shall come to pass in all the land,"
Says the LORD,**

**"That two-thirds in it shall be cut off *and* die,
But *one*-third shall be left in it:**

**I will bring the *one*-third through the fire,
Will refine them as silver is refined,
And test them as gold is tested.**

**They will call on My name,
And I will answer them.**

**I will say, 'This is My people';
And each one will say, 'The LORD is my God.'"**

a. **I will bring the one-third through the fire:** After the dispersion of Israel there will come a time of devastation and purification through fiery trials. Two-thirds will be destroyed and the remaining third will be put **into the fire** but preserved.

i. This seems to suggest that only one-third of the Jewish people will survive the Great Tribulation. If this is the case, no wonder these years are called *the time of Jacob's trouble* (Jer 30:7), and why Jesus said the Great Tribulation will be the most horrific time in human history (Mat 24:21). Indeed, the Book of Revelation suggests that only one

b. **They will call on My name, and I will answer them:** This prophetically refers to the Jewish people who survive the Great Tribulation, come to salvation in the second half of that final period and welcome Jesus in the name of the LORD. This group – which includes the 144,000 of Revelation 7, 14, but is not limited to that number – will make up the core of a restored Israel as Jesus establishes His millennial rule over the earth.

The Coming Day of the Lord

Zec 14:1 Behold, the day of Jehovah comes, and your spoil shall be divided among you.

Zec 14:2 For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem. And the city shall be captured, and the houses plundered, and the women ravished. And half the city shall go into exile and the rest of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

Zec 14:3 And Jehovah shall go out and fight against those nations, like the day He fought in the day of battle.

Zec 14:4 And His feet shall stand in that day on the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives shall divide from its middle, from the east even to the west, a very great valley. And half of the mountain shall move toward the north, and half of it toward the south.

Zec 14:5 And you shall flee to the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains shall reach to Azal. And you shall flee as you fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah. And Jehovah my God shall come, and all the saints with You.

Zec 14:6 And it will be in that day, there shall not be light; the glorious ones will shrink.

Zec 14:7 And it will be, one day which shall be known to Jehovah; not day and not night, but it will be, there will be light at evening time.

Zec 14:8 And it shall be in that day, living waters shall go out from Jerusalem, half of them shall go toward the eastern sea, and half of them toward the western sea; in summer and in winter it shall be.

Zec 14:9 And Jehovah shall be King over all the earth. In that day there shall be one Jehovah, and His name one.

Zec 14:10 All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem. And it shall rise and dwell in its place, from Benjamin's Gate to the place of the First Gate, to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananeel to the king's winepresses.

Zec 14:11 And they shall live in it. And there shall not again be a shutting in, but Jerusalem shall dwell safely.

Zec 14:12 And this shall be the plague with which Jehovah will strike all the peoples who have fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh shall rot while they stand on their feet, and their eyes will rest in their sockets, and their tongues shall rot in their mouths.

Zec 14:13 And it shall be in that day, a great panic of Jehovah shall be among them; and they shall each one lay hold of his neighbor, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbor.

Zec 14:14 And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem. And the wealth of the surrounding nations shall be gathered, gold, and silver, and clothing, very much.

Zec 14:15 And so shall be the plague of the horse, the mule, the camel, and the ass, and all the beasts which shall be in those camps, like this plague.

Zec 14:16 And it shall be, everyone who is left from all the nations which came up against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, Jehovah of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.

Zec 14:17 And it shall be, whoever will not go up from the families of the earth to Jerusalem to worship the King, Jehovah of hosts, there shall even be no rain on them.

Zec 14:18 And if the family of Egypt does not go up, nor come in, then the rain shall not be on them, but the plague with which Jehovah shall strike the nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.

Zec 14:19 This shall be Egypt's offense, and the offense of all nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.

Zec 14:20 In that day there shall be on the bells of the horses, HOLY TO JEHOVAH. And the pots in the house of Jehovah shall be like the bowls before the altar.

Zec 14:21 And every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holy to Jehovah of hosts. And all those who sacrifice shall come and take of them, and boil in them. And in that day there shall not be a trader in the house of Jehovah of hosts any more.

Zechariah 14:1-21

Zechariah 14 – Holiness to the LORD

A. Israel attacked but defended by the returning Messiah.

1. (1-2) Jerusalem under siege from the nations.

**Behold, the day of the LORD is coming,
And your spoil will be divided in your midst.
For I will gather all the nations to battle against
Jerusalem;
The city shall be taken,
The houses rifled,
And the women ravished.
Half of the city shall go into captivity,
But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off
from the city.**

a. **I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem:** Zechariah seems to have the very end times in view, when Jerusalem will be surrounded and attacked by some type of international force. When the Romans came against Jerusalem in A.D. 70 they came with a multinational army and brought terrible destruction on the city and its people. Yet there was none of the deliverance that Zechariah will describe in the following verses, so it is difficult to say that this was fulfilled in the Roman attack upon Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

b. **Half the city shall go into captivity:** This attack against Jerusalem will be severe, but the city itself will not be overthrown (**the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city**).

2. (3-5) The Messiah intervenes for His people.

**Then the LORD will go forth
And fight against those nations,**

**As He fights in the day of battle.
And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives,
Which faces Jerusalem on the east.
And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two,
From east to west,
Making a very large valley;
Half of the mountain shall move toward the north
And half of it toward the south.
Then you shall flee *through* My mountain valley,
For the mountain valley shall reach to Azal.
Yes, you shall flee
As you fled from the earthquake
In the days of Uzziah king of Judah.
Thus the LORD my God will come,
And all the saints with You.**

a. **Then the LORD will go forth and fight:** Just when it seems that all hope will be gone for Jerusalem and the people of Israel, then the LORD will fight for His people.

i. "God is said to *go forth* when he manifests his power by delivering his people and punishing their enemies." (Pulpit)

b. **His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives... And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, from east to west:** This speaks of the LORD – Jesus, as God the Son – materially returning to a material earth and setting His feet on **the Mount of Olives**. At that time a great split will cut the Mount of Olives in two, and the persecuted people of Jerusalem will **flee through** the valley made by the split.

c. **Thus the LORD my God will come, and all the saints with You:** Jesus will touch His feet to the Mount of Olives when He returns in glory with **all the saints**, the *armies of heaven* described in Rev 19:14.

i. This was the type of arrival the Jews in Jesus' day hoped for. Indeed, when the Roman armies surrounded Jerusalem in A.D. 70 a mistaken assurance from prophecies like this made the Jews utterly confident that the Messiah would return from heaven and wipe out the Roman armies surrounding Jerusalem. They could not see that the Messiah must first be rejected and the nation brought to repentance as Zechariah mentioned in 11:12-13 and 12:10.

B. The Kingdom of the Messiah.

1. (6-11) The Messiah's rule changes the earth.

It shall come to pass in that day

***That* there will be no light;**

The lights will diminish.

It shall be one day

Which is known to the LORD;

Neither day nor night.

But at evening time it shall happen

***That* it will be light.**

And in that day it shall be—

***That* living waters shall flow from Jerusalem,**

Half of them toward the eastern sea

And half of them toward the western sea;

In both summer and winter it shall occur.

And the LORD shall be King over all the earth.

In that day it shall be

"The LORD is one,"

And His name one.

All the land shall be turned into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be raised up and inhabited in her place from Benjamin's Gate to the place of the First Gate and the Corner Gate, and *from* the Tower of Hananeel to the king's winepresses.

***The people shall dwell in it;
And no longer shall there be utter destruction,
But Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.***

a. **At evening time it shall happen that it will be light:** Now Zechariah looked forward to the glory of Jerusalem in the Messiah's kingdom. The lights we guide our lives by **will diminish**, but God will establish His own light.

b. **Living waters shall flow from Jerusalem:** Jerusalem will no longer be a dry city, but a glorious river will flow from the city and branch off both east and west, and it will be a never ending flow (**in both summer and winter it shall occur**).

i. All over the world people want to know what will happen to Jerusalem. Zechariah knows the answer – God will gloriously save and restore Jerusalem, making it the capital city of the millennial earth.

ii. Ezekiel 47 records a vision that may describe this scene. Ezekiel saw a river flowing from the throne of God and down to the Dead Sea, bringing life and vitality everywhere.

c. **All the land shall be turned into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem:** Since the mountains around Jerusalem would no longer be needed as a defense, they could be flattened into a plain.

d. **Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited:** This will be the first time in a long time that Jerusalem will be a safe place to live.

2. (12-15) Enemies are forever plagued.

And this shall be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the people who fought against Jerusalem:

**Their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet,
Their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets,
And their tongues shall dissolve in their mouths.
It shall come to pass in that day
That a great panic from the LORD will be among them.
Everyone will seize the hand of his neighbor,
And raise his hand against his neighbor's hand;
Judah also will fight at Jerusalem.
And the wealth of all the surrounding nations
Shall be gathered together:
Gold, silver, and apparel in great abundance.
Such also shall be the plague
On the horse *and* the mule,
On the camel and the donkey,
And on all the cattle that will be in those camps.
So *shall* this plague *be*.**

a. Their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet: In the glorious deliverance the Messiah brings, the enemies of God and His people will be destroyed by plague, mutual slaughter, and by the sword of Judah (**Judah also will fight at Jerusalem**).

i. The description of flesh dissolving makes some think that Zechariah is describing the effects of a neutron or nuclear bomb.

b. The wealth of all the surrounding nations shall be gathered together: In the glorious deliverance the Messiah brings, Jerusalem will become a wealthy and influential city again.

3. (16-19) All the nations come to Jerusalem to worship the LORD.

And it shall come to pass *that* everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go

up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. And it shall be *that* whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, on them there will be no rain. If the family of Egypt will not come up and enter in, they *shall have no rain*; they shall receive the plague with which the LORD strikes the nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.

a. **Shall go up from year to year to worship the King:** Instead of coming to Jerusalem for battle now the nations come to honor God and to remember His faithfulness to Israel in the wilderness by keeping the **Feast of Tabernacles**.

i. Jesus told us to go to the ends of the earth with the gospel but in the millennium the earth will come to Jerusalem to worship and honor God.

b. **Whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem... on them there will be no rain:** God won't *make* people worship Him during the millennium, but the advantages of worshipping and honoring God will be more evident than ever.

c. **If the family of Egypt will not come up and enter in, they shall have no rain:** Egypt is specifically mentioned because they were a nation not especially dependent on rain, yet they too would be punished if they were disobedient.

4. (20-21) *The common is made holy.*

In that day "HOLINESS TO THE LORD" shall be engraved on the bells of the horses. The pots in the

Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yes, every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holiness to the LORD of hosts. Everyone who sacrifices shall come and take them and cook in them. In that day there shall no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts.

a. **In that day "HOLINESS TO THE LORD" shall be engraved on the bells of the horses:** This was the great inscription on the metal band around the high priest's headpiece (Exo 28:36). In the glory of the Messiah's kingdom horses won't be needed for war any longer – now even they could wear the emblems of **HOLINESS TO THE LORD**.

b. **The pots in the LORD's house:** These were the cooking utensils used by worshippers to cook for their own the sacrificial meat intended for them from the peace offerings. The **bowls before the altar** were used to gather and sprinkle sacrificial blood on the altar. These show that animal sacrifice will continue in the millennium, but *not as atonement for sin* – which was perfectly satisfied by the atoning work of Jesus. Sacrifice in the millennium will look back to the perfect work of Jesus.

c. **Every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holiness to the LORD of hosts:** In the glory of the Messiah's kingdom, what was previously common is made holy; the holy is made holier; and the irreclaimably profane is forever shut out. At the end of it all, there is no longer any distinction between the holy and profane. All is set apart to God and His purposes.

i. "The point is that the people and the city will be so holy that even these insignificant things will be fully dedicated to the Lord." (Boice)

ii. There is a right way and a wrong way to eliminate the line between the holy and the profane: you can

make everything *holy* (set apart to the LORD), or you can make everything *profane* (set apart to sin and self). Zechariah ends his prophecy making it clear that God's way is to make everything that was once common or profane *holy* instead.